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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

THE KITAWALA:  
A STUDY OF MILLENNIAL RESPONSES IN CENTRAL AFRICA

by



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A THESIS

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## ABSTRACT

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, Charles Taze Russell found himself in a state of personal religious crisis. His quest for more satisfying answers to his manifold theological questions led him and a small group of followers to establish a movement which later came to be known as the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, the members of which call themselves "Jehovah's Witnesses". One of the principal beliefs of Russell and his followers was in the imminent invisible return of Christ in 1914, an event which would signal the beginning of the millennium or thousand years reign of Christ.

Similarly, the last decade of the nineteenth century found an Australian Baptist, Joseph Booth, with an urgent desire to missionize Africa. In 1906, in the process of fulfilling this goal, Booth came into contact with the teachings of Russell. Also, Booth seems to have been influenced by the Pan-Africanism of Bishop Henry McNeal Turner of the American Methodist Episcopal Church of Philadelphia. Moulding from Russell's and Turner's gospels a new politico-religious philosophy, Booth proceeded to immerse Elliott Kamwana, a native Tongan, in these teachings. Thus, the Kitawala, a native-controlled offshoot of the Watch Tower Society, was born.

Brief overviews of the Lakeside Tonga and Mombera's Ngoni suggest that there were propensities arising from the internal structure of the two tribes which tended the Tonga toward acceptance of the Kitawala while the Ngoni largely rejected the movement. At the same time, external historical tribal relations with European missions and colonial administrations strongly influenced Tonga and Ngoni reactions





to the Kitawala.

The relationship of the Kitawala data to the work of Lanternari concerning religious movements and Wallace's theory of revitalization movements is discussed. The Kitawala data do not corroborate Wallace's sequence of "periods" in a revitalization movement, and the consequent weaknesses in Wallace's classification are pointed out. Suggestions for further research are made as a result of the analysis of the relationship between present theory concerning religious movements and the data from the Kitawala.



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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NWT--New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures.

RRC--Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Disturbances  
in the Copper Belt, Northern Rhodesia.

WTBTS--Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.





## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Outline of the Study

The description, analysis and classification of religious phenomena have occupied a prominent place in anthropological studies ever since anthropology became a distinctive discipline among the social sciences. More specifically, an interest in messianic and millenarian movements has formed an integral part of the anthropological study of religion.

The millenarian movement, which represents the major concern of this paper, has been defined in fairly explicit terms by Norman Cohn (1962:31). A millenarian movement is

... any religious movement inspired by the phantasy of a salvation which is to be:

- (a) Collective, in the sense that it is to be enjoyed by the faithful as a group.
- (b) Terrestrial, in the sense that it is to be realized on this earth and not in some otherworldly heaven.
- (c) Imminent, in the sense that it is to come both soon and suddenly.
- (d) Total, in the sense that it is to utterly transform life on earth so that the dispensation will be no mere improvement of the present, but perfection itself.
- (e) Accomplished by agencies which are consciously regarded as supernatural.

The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, a sect more commonly recognized in North America under the rubric of "Jehovah's Witnesses",



exemplifies such a movement. The Society, founded in 1874 in Brooklyn, New York by Charles Taze Russell, soon launched upon a world-wide program of missionizing. One of its many branches was established in Cape Town, and shortly gave rise to another millenarian movement, the "Kitawala". However, though there were bonds of similar doctrine and common literature between this movement and the American Watch Tower Society, the Kitawala assumed a distinctive politico-religious character with concomitant implications in the fields of economic, social and race relations.

The major purposes of this essay are four: first, to describe the American Watch Tower movement and the African Kitawala as religious (and specifically millenarian) phenomena; second, to suggest various factors which may have contributed to their divergence though they began as one and the same sect; third, to investigate the acceptance or rejection of the Kitawala in various tribal groups; and fourth, to relate the study to theory concerning millenarian movements and acculturation.

Chapter Two sketches the history of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society in America. Because the men who have filled the office of president of the Society have played an integral role in determining the character of the sect, the history of the organization is recounted in conjunction with a brief biography of each of the three presidents. The remaining portions of the chapter document some of the salient features of Jehovah's Witness doctrine.

Chapter Three provides a general overview of the Kitawala: the history of the transition from Watch Tower Society to the Pan-African character of the Kitawala, the political and social aspects of





the movement, its diffusion, and finally, some of the unique doctrines (social, religious and political) associated with the Kitawala message.

The fact that the Kitawala is not solely religious in orientation or manifestation, but simultaneously displays definite political features, is important. Tracing the history of the emanation of the movement in South Africa presents the problem of distinguishing between the political and religious aspects of the Kitawala. I suggest, therefore, that the religious heritage of the Kitawala is traceable to the American Watch Tower movement of Charles Taze Russell, while the political ancestry is in large measure attributable to Bishop Henry McNeal Turner of the African Methodist Episcopal Church of Philadelphia. Furthermore, there is evidence to support the hypothesis that these distinctive contributing sources converged in the person of Joseph Booth, an Australian Baptist minister who independently missionized in South and Central Africa at this time.

The personality of Joseph Booth is a necessary key to the understanding of the early history of the Kitawala. He was a dominant figure in the South African separatist church movement, a movement which sparked the rise of a host of separatist sects in addition to the Kitawala. He is personally credited with the establishment of six separatist missions or churches other than the Kitawala. Booth allied himself at one time or another with the following groups: the Zambesi Industrial Mission, the Baptist Industrial Mission, the Seventh Day Baptists, the Church of Christ, the Seventh Day Adventists, the Watch Tower, and the Nyasa Industrial Mission.

While Booth is essential to the understanding of the inception and diffusion of the Kitawala, he is a hindrance in another sense. The



instability of his commitment to any sect and his consequent series of movements from one to the other, make it difficult for us to determine the limits of his contribution to the Kitawala. We must therefore view the origin of the Kitawala in Africa in the context of Booth's previous missionary and political activity. We should also be aware of the numerous sects which were subsequently established by indigenous leaders who were protégés of Booth.

Chapter Four attempts to cope with the problem of why the Kitawala was apparently more readily acceptable to some tribal groups than to others. Mombera's Ngoni and the Lakeside Tonga are selected for comparative purposes. The Ngoni largely rejected the Kitawala message while the majority of the Tonga accepted it. The validity of the comparison is enhanced by two further factors: the Tonga and Ngoni had relatively long contact before the advent of the Kitawala and also, the Kitawala made an attempt to proselytize both groups.

Investigating the question of the different attitudes of the Ngoni and Tonga toward the Kitawala also entails investigating the contact of these tribes with European missions and the colonial government prior to the establishment of the Kitawala. In a sense, the stage was pre-set for Kitawala encroachment. The European missions, with some few exceptions, had established the pre-eminent authority of the Bible in the minds of their converts. The Kitawala had only to offer a different interpretation. The missions imposed rigid and socially disruptive sanctions and controls upon their adherents. The Kitawala took advantage of the discontent. The colonial government often adopted policies of racial discrimination which assumed the inferiority of the indigenous population. The Kitawala induced a politico-religious





eschatology which proclaimed the eventual overthrow of the oppressive administration. Both the missions and the colonial administration were constant examples of a culture with superior technology. The Kitawala, once again through the promise of the millennium, offered this technology and eventual concomitant wealth to the African community.

A point of further relevance is the direct, though hostile, contact which the Kitawala established with the colonial governments and also with certain native authorities. Not only was the movement militantly subversive to colonial authority, but it also assumed an important role in the questioning and gradual decline of certain traditional tribal authorities.

Chapter Five will draw our study to a conclusion. Some of the reasons for the development of the Kitawala as a phenomenon distinct from the American Watch Tower movement will be concisely stated. Also, in this concluding chapter the relevance which the study may have for broader theoretical speculations concerning millenarian movements and acculturation will be discussed.

### Methodological Problems

In the writing of this essay, some problems were encountered regarding the availability and reliability of certain data. I shall attempt to outline briefly some of the more important of these issues and explain my approach to them.

In the second chapter, which deals with the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society in America, there are two interrelated problems of significance. First of all, there are many gaps in the data provided by the publications of the Watch Tower Society. The Witnesses publish only



a minimum of selected pieces of information concerning their organization. They do not adopt a hospitable attitude toward investigators from outside the ranks of those few who actually control the sect. Consequently, at certain intervals throughout Chapter Two, information concerning the actual formal organization of the Society would be helpful, but unfortunately is not available.

The second issue stems from the first; the statistics relating to the Jehovah's Witnesses are provided by the Society. Because of this, there is no method by which they may be verified. For instance, the annual editions of the Yearbook of the Jehovah's Witnesses publish figures for membership in the Society on a national basis. These membership figures are calculated by counting as a Witness anyone who contributes ten or more dollars per year by purchasing literature or making an outright donation.

The data upon which Chapter Three is based pose even greater problems. First of all, there is a genuine dearth of data relevant to the Kitawala. Much of that which is available comes from secondary sources.

Second, there are many historical and geographical gaps in the data. Precisely how and when the Kitawala grew and spread from South Africa to Nyasaland and from there to the Rhodesias and the Congo is not known. The reader's bearing in mind that I have suggested many of these links in a purely speculative fashion therefore, cannot be over-emphasized.

Third, there is the critical issue of the difference between the Kitawala and the Watch Tower movement in Africa. In the relevant literature only Hooker (1965) makes this distinction clear. The



remainder of the data contains some allusions to such a differentiation, but these are minimal. However, I have accepted the division of the two phenomena and have attempted to apply this model to the remainder of the literature. In the final stages before the total decline of the Kitawala I feel that similar distinctions should be made between the Kitawala and other movements established by leaders who were at one time Kitawala adherents. For instance, what were the relationships, if any, between the Kitawala and Kambangunism? The data available to me, however, are for the most part too obscure to illuminate these issues.

Chapter Four presents no major problems so long as one understands that the groups being used in the comparison are the Lakeside Tonga and Mombera's Ngoni. The Lakeside Tonga must not be confused with the Plateau Tonga of Zambia or the Valley Tonga of the Zambesi River region. Similarly, Mombera's Ngoni must be distinguished from the other Ngoni groups who frequented east Africa. The only other thing to remember concerning this chapter is that the data on the Lakeside Tonga are supplied almost exclusively by Van Velsen while Read similarly provides the great bulk of the Ngoni data. For the Lakeside Tonga other ethnographies were not available. Additional data on the Ngoni were supplied by Barnes. Consequently, we receive largely one person's account of each group.





## CHAPTER TWO

### THE JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

#### I

#### HISTORY OF THE WITNESSES

The history of the Jehovah's Witness movement is best understood through the lives of the men who, since the establishment of the sect, have been in a position of leadership. This description of the Watch Tower movement in North America will begin with a brief biography of the three presidents of the Society: Charles Russell, Joseph Rutherford and Nathan Knorr. Most of the biographical data have been taken from Hoekema (1965:226-232), whose conservative Protestant theology has been compensated for in presenting the data.

#### Russell

Charles Taze Russell was born in Allegheny, Pennsylvania on February 16, 1852. Since his parents were devout Presbyterians, Charles received strong fundamentalist indoctrination. According to Deberty (1953:260), Russell's mother was extremely pious, spending most of her time reading and rereading the Bible. She was constantly fascinated by the obscure and symbolic poetry of the Apocalypse. Consequently, Charles received from his mother a spiritual heritage rich in magico-religious sentiment. Little is known of Russell's father. The elder Russell operated a chain of clothing stores and by the time Charles was fifteen, he was in partnership with his father. There is some suggestion (Deberty, 1953:250), though the supporting data are sketchy, that the senior Russell was a flamboyant and picturesque personality with a love





of publicity.

Early in his teens, Charles showed a dissatisfaction with the Presbyterian Church. This uneasiness goaded him to search for answers to his many religious questions, eventually leading him to frequent other denominations in hope of finding more satisfying answers.

He soon left the Presbyterian Church to become a Congregationalist and not long thereafter he underwent a period of agnosticism. Then, in 1870, Russell came into contact with a group of Adventists who re-established his belief in the inspiration of the Bible, though they did not succeed in erasing his skepticism (WTBTS, 1959:14). As a result of this meeting, Russell developed a fervor for Bible study and eventually initiated his own. Six others gathered for this Bible class which continued to meet regularly from 1870-1875.

The Adventist emphasis on Christ's bodily second coming provoked Russell before his twentieth birthday to publish his first pamphlet entitled The Object and Manner of the Lord's Return. This essay, which sold over fifty thousand copies (Pike, 1954:13), argued for the view that Christ's return would be invisible.

In 1876, Russell met N. H. Barbour, the leader of a group of Adventists which had split from the Seventh Day Adventists because they believed in the spiritual rather than bodily return of Christ. The Russell and Barbour groups merged and became joint publishers of The Herald of the Morning, a magazine which had previously been published by the Barbour group.

In 1877, Russell and Barbour co-authored Three Worlds or Plan of Redemption, in which they asserted that Christ's second presence had begun in 1874 and that the year 1914 would be the end of the gentile



times. However, within a year or so Russell split with Barbour because the latter refused to acknowledge that the death of Christ was "the ransom for Adam and his race" (Hoekema, 1965:225). Russell, in July 1879, began to publish his own periodical entitled Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence.

Russell rapidly gained followers. By 1880, some thirty congregations had been established in seven states and a year later, the Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society was established as an unincorporated group with Russell as manager. In December of 1884, a legal charter was granted to the Society. Then, in 1896, the Society changed its name to the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.

Russell had founded the movement in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, where a building had been purchased which was to serve as the Society's headquarters for some twenty years. In 1908, Joseph Rutherford, the Society's lawyer, obtained another property on behalf of the organization. The new location was Brooklyn, New York. In order to establish a legal claim to the new property, a new corporation had to be formed. Thus, the People's Pulpit Association of New York was born.

Russell made two European Tours, one in 1891 and the other in 1903. Both were for the purpose of establishing branches of the Society in other areas of the world. In 1900, the first branch office was opened in London under the name "International Bible Students Association". 1903 and 1904 saw similar activities in Germany and Australia respectively. At this time, books and pamphlets began to be published in languages other than English. Thus, early in the history of the Watch Tower, the Society adopted a firm policy of translating publications into local languages and dialects. This, perhaps more than





any other single factor, contributed most greatly to the rapid international expansion of the movement.

Recurrently during his career, Russell's personal integrity was questioned. At one point he advertised "miracle wheat" in one of his publications. He claimed that this variety of wheat would grow five times as rapidly as any other, and he offered the seed for but a dollar a pound. The Brooklyn Daily Eagle published a cartoon "exposing" the fraud and Russell promptly sued for libel. However, government investigation proved the miracle wheat actually to be inferior to standard varieties, and consequently Russell lost the case.

A further case of libel involved Russell and J. J. Ross, pastor of the James Street Baptist Church in Hamilton, Ontario. In 1912, Ross published an article which denounced Russell as a charlatan, and Russell replied by suing for libel.

In the trial which took place during the following year, Russell was proved to be a perjurer. When asked by Attorney Staunton, Ross's lawyer, whether he knew the Greek alphabet, Russell replied, "Oh, yes." When he was further asked to identify the Greek letters on top of a page of the Greek Testament which was handed him, he was unable to do so, finally admitting that he was not familiar with the Greek language. Russell furthermore had previously claimed to have been ordained by a recognized religious body. Staunton also pressed him on this point, finally asking him pointblank, "Now, you never were ordained by a bishop, clergyman, presbytery, council or any body of men living?" Russell answered, after a long pause, "I never was." (Hoekema, 1965:227)

On October 31, 1916, Russell died aboard a train while returning home from a conference in California. Following the death of



Russell, Joseph Rutherford assumed the leadership of the Society.

### Rutherford

Joseph Franklin Rutherford studied law and in 1891, at the age of twenty-two, was admitted to the bar. Sometime within the next decade he served as public prosecutor for Booneville, Missouri, and was appointed special judge for the Fourteenth Judicial District of Missouri. His judicial responsibilities simply entailed replacing the regular judge when the latter was absent. During this period Rutherford assumed the title of "Judge" Rutherford.

During his administration, Rutherford changed many of the policies of the Society. The Brooklyn office was reorganized. Rutherford tended to stress witnessing activities where Russell had emphasized Bible studies.

Whereas emphasis had previously been laid on Bible study, character development, and cultivation of fruits of the Spirit, all the stress came to be laid on the placing of literature, the making of calls, and the reporting of these calls to Watchtower Headquarters. Schnell claims that as a result of this change of purpose, more than three-fourths of the Bible Students originally associated with the movement left the group.\* (Hoekema, 1965:230)

Not only did a number of persons leave the Society of their own accord, but Rutherford dismissed the leaders of the dissension from their official posts in the Society. The dissidents, launching out on their own, established various schismatic groups.

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\*Schnell, once a fervent devotee of the Watch Tower Society, dissociated himself after some thirty years of adherence. His estimate of the number of Jehovah's Witnesses who left the movement when Rutherford assumed leadership is undoubtedly high, but does offer an indication of dissatisfaction among certain factions within the group.





From 1917 until the end of the First World War, Rutherford adopted an anti-war editorial policy in Watch Tower publications. This stand led to accusations of sedition and conspiracy which were time and again levelled at Rutherford.

In February of 1918 the Canadian Government forbade anyone to possess copies of Watch Tower publications; it was alleged that they contained seditious and anti-war statements.... In May of 1918 warrants were issued by the United States District Court of Eastern New York for the arrest of eight of the society's leaders, including Rutherford, charging them with conspiring to cause insubordination and refusal of duty in the United States military and naval forces. On June 20 the eight were found guilty of these charges, and the next day they were sentenced to twenty years imprisonment in the federal penitentiary at Atlanta, Georgia. (Hoekema, 1965:229)

For a time the Brooklyn offices of the Society closed, and the headquarters moved to Pittsburg. However, because of petitions sent by Jehovah's Witnesses to congressmen and other public officials, Rutherford and the other seven imprisoned leaders were released. This occurred in May of 1919, following the end of the war. Rutherford immediately reopened the Brooklyn office, and the activities of the Society were resumed with even greater fervor.

When the Second World War broke out, an official anti-war stance was again adopted. This time Rutherford did not personally go to jail, but many Jehovah's Witnesses were imprisoned.

On January 8, 1942, midway through the war, Rutherford died. He indeed left his imprint indelibly upon the Watch Tower Society. During his administration, the sect moved more toward the theocratic ideal. Leaders were no longer elected, but received positions by



appointment of the Brooklyn administration. Rutherford's writings were prolific. In fact, he produced even more books and pamphlets than Russell. As the second president of the Society, he led the Jehovah's Witnesses through a quarter of a century which knew the turbulence and instability of two world wars.

### Knorr

Nathan Homer Knorr succeeded Rutherford to the office of president of the Society on January 13, 1942, five days after Rutherford's death. Knorr, though of a Reformed Church background, joined the Watch Tower Society in his late teens. He became a full-time preacher and later was employed in the Brooklyn office. His initial duties on the headquarters staff were connected with printing of literature, and eventually he became general manager of the entire publishing operation. In 1934, Knorr was placed on the board of directors of the New York corporation, and in 1940 he assumed the office of vice-president of the Pennsylvania corporation.

Knorr, who is the current president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, seems to have a particular interest in the field of religious education. Though he is not as widely known as the previous presidents of the Society, he has piloted the organization through an immense project of expansion directly related to his educational emphasis.

In 1943, under the impetus of Knorr, the Society established the Gilead Watch Tower Bible School in South Lansing, New York. Furthermore, "theocratic ministry schools" were established in each congregation.





While Russell and Rutherford published a host of books which they had personally written, under Knorr the Society concentrates on publications which are anonymously written (probably by a number of authors simultaneously). He published three textbooks for use in congregational studies: Theocratic Aid to Kingdom Publishers (WTBTS, 1945), Equipped for Every Good Work (WTBTS, 1946), and Qualified to be Ministers (WTBTS, 1955a). A further major undertaking to Knorr's credit is the publication of the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures. This book is the official Jehovah's Witness translation of the Bible. The translation was done by a group of men who prefer to remain anonymous even after their death.

A comparison of the 1942 and 1966 yearbooks of the Jehovah's Witnesses suggests the effectiveness of Knorr's leadership. In 1942, the Witnesses propagandized in 54 countries of the world, whereas in 1965, they preached in 197 countries.

Just ten years ago, in 1955, there were 570,694 ministers of Jehovah's Witnesses preaching from house to house regularly every month. But now, in 1965, there were 1,034,268 declaring the good news all over the world.... (WTBTS, 1965b:39)

## II

### DOCTRINE

#### Source of Doctrinal Authority

The Jehovah's Witnesses claim the Bible as their authority in life and conduct.

To let God be found true means to let God have the say as to what is the truth that sets men free. It means to accept his



Word, the Bible, as the truth. Hence, in this book, our appeal is to the Bible for truth. Our obligation is to back up what is said herein by quotations from the Bible for proof of truthfulness and reliability. (WTBTS, 1952:9)

However, when we delve to the heart of the matter, we see that the Bible is the Jehovah's Witness authority only insofar as the Scriptures are interpreted in the light of Watch Tower publications. In other words, private interpretation of the Bible is anathema; the Watch Tower organization holds the sole key to biblical hermeneutics.\* The Bible itself supports this view according to the Watch Tower exegetes:

Consequently we have the prophetic word made more sure; and you are doing well in paying attention to it as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until day dawns and a daystar rises, in your hearts. For you know this first, that no prophecy of Scripture springs from private interpretation. For prophecy was at no time brought

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\*It is interesting to note in the December 15, 1968 issue of The Watchtower an article entitled "The Joy of Abounding in Accurate Knowledge". On page 763, the article states:

... if one wants to know how a particular scripture or subject is understood by the Jehovah's Witnesses, he can consult the publications where it has already been explained. True, some matters have not yet been discussed. Would it be advisable then to write to the Watch Tower Society and request a special advance personal explanation? No, that is not the way God provides spiritual "food at the proper time". He furnishes it for his people as a group. When the prophetic significance of some portion of the Bible is available, that information is published for the benefit of all.

Evidently not only is private interpretation of the Bible condemned, but also an individual must await the progressive interpretation of the Bible through the organization.





by man's will, but men spoke from God as  
they were borne along by holy spirit--2  
Pet. 1:19-21 NWT.

We see, then, that though the Jehovah's Witnesses appeal to the Bible as their authority, the Watch Tower Society is responsible for providing aids to the interpretation of the Scriptures which are indispensable to an enlightened understanding.

The Watch Tower interpretation of Scripture may run the gamut from literalism to figurativism. The classic example of the former is the Watch Tower apologetic for refusal of blood transfusions. The Witnesses base their opposition to transfusions on Leviticus 17:14 (NWT):

... I said to the sons of Israel: You must not eat the blood of any sort of flesh, because the soul of every sort of flesh is its blood. Anyone eating it will be cut off.

We find an instance of figurativism in the following:

Some wrongfully expect a literal fulfillment of the symbolic statements of the Bible. Such hope to see the glorified Jesus come seated on a white cloud where every human eye will see him. They overlook Jesus' words before he left: "A little longer and the world will behold me no more." (WTBTS, 1952:197)

However, it is impossible to elicit from the Watch Tower publications exactly what are the guidelines for determining which biblical passages are to be taken literally and which are to be accepted figuratively.

Another claim of Watch Tower exegetes is the ability to determine specific dates and events from the Bible. The date 1914 was prophesied by the Jehovah's Witnesses as being the date of Christ's second coming into the kingdom. Let us follow the system of logic used for prediction.



Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, overthrew Zedekiah, the last king of Israel in 607 B.C.\* This was the end of God's earthly kingdom and the beginning of the "appointed times of the nations".\*\* In A.D. 33 God raised Christ from the dead and brought him to heaven where God said to His Son: "Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies a stool for your feet" (Hebrews 1:13 NWT). Thus Christ was to wait for his kingdom until the end of the period designated the "appointed times of the nations". According to Daniel 4:16, the "appointed times of the nations" is "seven times" in length.

How long are seven times? The witnesses of Jehovah explain this by pointing to Revelation 12:6, 14. Verse 14 speaks of "a time, and times, and half a time". This means three and a half times, or half of seven times. Verse 6 speaks of three and a half times as being 1260 days. So "seven times" would be twice 1260 days or 2520 days.

But are "seven times" 2520 twenty-four hour days? No. With God each day counts for a year. At Numbers 14:34 God's rule is "a day for a year...." So the 2520 days become 2520 years. This makes the "seven times" of the "appointed times of the nations" 2520 years long. (WTBTS, 1958a:173)

If we reckon 2520 years from 607 B.C., the resulting date is 1914 A.D.,

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\*Where this date comes from is impossible to say. It is not in agreement with the majority of historical or archaeological accounts. According to Hoekema (1965:253, n. 126) "Old Testament scholars are virtually unanimous in dating ... the fall of Jerusalem ... in 587 or 586 B.C."

\*\*According to the Witnesses, this is a special time period. "It is the long time period when the Gentile nations or the non-Jewish nations rule the earth. It is a time when the Devil rules the world without God's hindering the Devil. It is the time when the Devil becomes in the largest sense, 'the god of this world'" (WTBTS, 1959: 171).





the year when Christ made his invisible return into the kingdom.

A third method of biblical interpretation is that of pointing to a prophecy in retrospect. By this, I mean that following the occurrence of an event, a biblical prophecy is attached in such a way that the prophecy is regarded as "fulfilled" in the occurrence in question.

Finally, the Jehovah's Witnesses seem to use the Bible almost as a fetish.\* The Bible itself, and quoted passages from the Bible, seem to have a supernatural capacity to protect, cure, etc.

People who do not appreciate the sacred Word of Jehovah and do not use it cannot find the spiritual prosperity, faith, joy, hope, liberty and security that Jehovah's servants find. There are so many advantages in having appreciation of the sacred Word of God. When God's laws are followed, good health results and care is taken of the body God has given. Also, by obeying what is right, there is a good conscience; there is improvement in family relationships. The importance of being separate from this system of things is made clear. All of this depends upon the use of God's Word. It is a protection against getting involved in what is wrong. (Watch Tower, February 15, 1969)

Again, the Bible will "... protect us in the presence and from the influence of immoral men and women ..." (Watch Tower, February 15, 1969).

### Theology

The doctrines and beliefs of the Jehovah's Witnesses are centered about Jehovah God. Their conception of Jehovah is such that they declare all trinitarian doctrine to be a product of Satan.

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\*A fetish is "an object that is revered because it is believed to house a supernatural power" (Hoebel, 1966:565).





The origin of the trinity doctrine is traced back to the ancient Babylonians and Egyptians and other ancient mythologists. It will not be disputed by Jews and Christians that these ancient peoples worshipped demon gods and that God's typical nation of Israel was warned not to mingle with them because of this. It follows, then, that God was not the author of this doctrine.\* (WTBTS, 1952:101)

Little attention is paid by the Witnesses to the fact that the name "Jehovah" is the anglicized form of the Hebrew "Yahweh". It is sufficient that the name "Jehovah" appears 6,823\*\* times in the Old Testament and is the designated name of the God of Israel.

According to Pike (1954:32), the major attributes of Jehovah are Justice, Power, Love and Wisdom. Jehovah is also Creator, the True and Living God, the Great Spirit, the Almighty and the Supreme One.

As Jehovah's Witnesses deny trinitarian concepts of God, and worship Jehovah God only, Jesus Christ is accordingly not equal with Jehovah. Christ is the first of all the creations of Jehovah, and though he may be a god, he is not God.

Thus he (Christ) is ranked with God's creation, being first among them and also most beloved and most favored among them. He is not the author of the creation of God; but after God had created him as his firstborn Son, then God used him as his

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\*According to Hoekema (1965:256), the Jehovah's Witnesses believe that the doctrine of the Trinity emerged from Babylon at about 2200 B.C. The Babylonian concept of a trinity included: "Cush, the father; Semiramis, the mother (Cush's wife); and Nimrod, the first ruler of Babylon, who was the son of Semiramis but later became her husband". Since Nimrod married his mother, it is possible to argue that he is his own father and his own son.

\*\*The name "Jehovah" in the text of the New World Translation of the New Testament has been used 237 times, without warrant of the Greek text (Hoekema, 1965:257).



working Partner in the creating of all the rest of creation.\* (WTBTS, 1952:33)

Though Jehovah's Witnesses teach the authenticity of the Virgin Birth, they do not believe in the Incarnation. Christ was but a Jew who lived as a man and died as a "seditious blasphemer". He was not a god become man, but he divested himself of his heavenly character to become "altogether man". As a man he yielded himself totally to the will of Jehovah God.

The Witnesses contend that Christ was never crucified, but rather was impaled on a tree. The cross is a pagan phallic symbol, derived from the ancient Egyptian crux ansata. This symbol represents the male and female organs combined. According to the Witness doctrine, Christ was tied to an upright stake. The cross as a Christian symbol is a later addition to Christian thought. It became acceptable following the Emperor Constantine's vision in 312 A.D. Hence, the cross, in the eyes of Jehovah's Witnesses, is an added element of idolatry.

As for the third person in the Trinity of Christendom, the Holy Spirit, the Jehovah's Witnesses assign no personality to this spirit. Instead, holy spirit\*\* is seen as an impersonal

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\*According to the Jehovah's Witnesses, Christ is literally the firstborn Son of God, but is not God's only Son. Jehovah had two sons; Jesus Christ, who is the Logos and Lucifer whose name means Light-bearer or Morning Star. Lucifer is spoken of as "Son of the Morning". God created Lucifer in the very earliest stages of creation, as Jesus himself was created by Jehovah. However, Lucifer is junior to Jesus. It is to the Logos and Lucifer that Job 38:7 (NWT) is said to apply: "... the morning stars joyfully cried out together, and all the sons of God began shouting in applause". Jehovah appointed Lucifer in charge of human beings when they were created. In this capacity, the second son of God "supervised ... life in the Garden of Eden" (Pike, 1954:39).

\*\*The word "spirit", when it refers to the Holy Spirit, is never capitalized in the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures.





force.\* "So the holy spirit is the invisible active force of Almighty God which moves his servants to do his will" (WTBTS, 1952:108). For instance, holy spirit was the guiding force in the preparation of the Bible.

The Witness view of man is very complex. Man is a combination of the "dust of the ground" and "the breath of life". It is the combination of these two entities which produces a soul or a creature called man. In other words, man does not have a soul; he is soul. The doctrine of Christendom is of the devil because it teaches that man has an immortal soul. "The Scriptures definitely show that immortality belonged originally to Jehovah God alone.... Immortality is a reward for faithfulness. It does not come automatically to a human at birth" (WTBTS, 1952:74).

But the truth (so far as the Witnesses are concerned) is that man does not differ from the animals because he has an immortal soul. In fact, man is but a higher form of animal.\*\* Thus, other animals, as well as man, are souls. Animals, men, angels, Lucifer, and Christ are in essence similar. There is only a difference in level, animals being a lower form of life than man, man than angels, etc.

Sin entered the life of man through the fall. In the

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\*The Jehovah's Witness conception of holy spirit is akin to the definition of mana offered by Lessa and Vogt (1958:203): "Mana ... refers to sheer power--occult force independent of either persons or spirits."

\*\*It is interesting to note that the Witness (WTBTS, 1952:66) apologetic for this view is based heavily upon scientific thought. In numerous other writings (e.g., WTBTS, 1965a:180) scientific discovery is vehemently debunked. It seems that the criterion of the admissibility of scientific evidence in Witness apologetics is whether or not the scientific view agrees with Witness dogma.





beginning, God created Adam and Eve perfect. "God did not appoint the perfect man to die, but God opened to him the opportunity of everlasting life\* in human perfection in the Edenic paradise" (WTBTS, 1950:32).

However, Adam and Eve were disobedient to Jehovah. Sin entered the world through disobedience (WTBTS, 1958a:29). "Since Adam and Eve had lost their perfection, their children must be born in an imperfect condition. Just as parents today often pass sicknesses on to their children, so Adam and Eve passed sin and death on to theirs" (WTBTS, 1958a:35).

Atonement for the sin of Adam was made by Jesus Christ. Christ sacrificed his own human life as a ransom for Adam's race. The atonement of Christ had to exactly cover the sins of men. Those who have faith in God's provision may be freed from inherited sin and receive the gift of life. Inherited sin brings annihilation; faith in Jehovah brings everlasting life. That which is redeemed or brought back is perfect human life, the life which Adam forfeited.

However, Christ did not actually make atonement for all. The first to be excluded is Adam. "The man Adam is not included in those ransomed. Why not? Because he was a willful sinner, was justly sentenced to death, and died deservedly, and God would not reverse his judgment and give Adam life" (WTBTS, 1952:119). Also, those who remain eternally dead, and are thus annihilated, are not included in the ransom (Hoekema, 1965:277).

With regard to salvation, however, there are two distinctly

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\*Everlasting life is not the same as immortality of the soul. Immortality is an inherent property of a being. Everlasting life is a gift which Jehovah gives to men if they are obedient to Him.



separate categories of people in Jehovah's Witness belief. The first is the "Anointed" class and the remainder are "other sheep" or "Jonadabs". Everlasting life will not be the same for both classes. "The Bible plainly shows that some of these, that is, 144,000 will share in heavenly glory with Christ Jesus, while others will enjoy the blessings of life down here on earth" (WTBTS, 1952:298).

Baptism for both the Anointed and the Jonadabs is not for forgiveness of sins but to symbolize the dedication of a life to Jehovah. The Anointed then must look forward to the sacrificing of earthly life in favor of the life of a spirit creature. As Christ died as a man and so was annihilated, so must those of the Anointed be prepared to do. Christ was then given a new spirit life as Jehovah will give to the Anointed. Thus, the Anointed only, the 144,000 elect of Jehovah, will share in the glories of heaven with Christ (WTBTS, 1950: 117-21).

But what of the other sheep? Though the Jonadabs may not look forward to sharing heavenly glories with Christ, they have the possibility of everlasting life here on earth (WTBTS, 1953:308-11). This salvation is attained by dedication to Jehovah and the consequent hope of passing unscathed through the Battle of Armageddon into the New World of the Millennium. These persons would live under the theocratic rule of Jesus Christ, and during that time know perfect human life. It is to this hope that the famous slogan of Judge Rutherford applied: "Millions now living will never die!"

### Eschatology

The predominance of eschatological themes in Jehovah's Witness



thought may be appreciated by a quick perusal of Watch Tower publications. The periodical Watchtower is rife with articles concerning the end times. Numerous books and pamphlets are dedicated to the topic (see for example: WTBS, 1942; 1950; 1953; 1955b; 1955c; 1958a). In one sense, even the present time is eschatological in context as Christ's invisible return in 1914 marked the end of the "appointed times of the nations" and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. "The 'time of the end' began in 1914; it ends when the Devil's world is destroyed at the 'accomplished end'" (WTBS, 1958a:178). The "accomplished end" is the termination of the "time of the end" and means the end of all nations and the annihilation of all persons who do not love and obey Jehovah (WTBS, 1958a:178).

From the time of his spiritual ascension into heaven until 1914, Christ sat at the right hand of God (WTBS, 1950:220). In 1914, he ascended the throne of the Kingdom of God. From 1914 to 1918, Christ was the sole monarch of the Kingdom. Then, in 1918, the heavenly spiritual resurrection of the 144,000 began. As it was never the intention of Christ to rule the Kingdom alone, these risen ones assumed a role with Christ in the ruling of the Kingdom.

The short duration of Christ's sole rulership (1914-1918) is explained by the Witnesses:

We can learn when these members of God's spiritual nation began to live there with Christ by looking back at some of the things that happened at the time of Christ's first presence on earth. Back in the year 29 Jesus was anointed with God's spirit. Three and a half years after that, or in 33 (A.D.), he came to the temple in Jerusalem and cleaned the money changers out of it. Then, ... just three days after ... he was killed and buried.







But on the third day Jehovah brought him back from the dead.

Time periods like these are found during Jesus' second presence. In 1914 Jesus was crowned as King of the new world. Three and a half years after that, or in 1918, he cleansed Jehovah's spiritual temple. We know that this happened then because that is when Christians who had selfish hearts and wrong ideas toward his service dropped out of his organization. (WTBTS, 1958a:213)\*

In 1918, then, Christ executed judgment on the "house of God". This was the beginning of a more or less progressive judgment. During the "time of the end", from 1918 to the Battle of Armageddon, Christ undertakes the continual separation of the "sheep" and the "goats" (WTBTS, 1955c:160). The "sheep" are those who accept the message of the "remnant" (WTBTS, 1955c:164). The "goats" are those who reject the message and scorn the "remnant" (WTBTS, 1952:290). The sheep will be gathered at the right hand of God and the goats at the left (WTBTS, 1955c:164-65). Then the Battle of Armageddon will occur resulting in the destruction of the nations (WTBTS, 1952:287) and the annihilation of the goats (WTBTS, 1955c:165-66). The sheep, however, will survive Armageddon and enter everlasting life in the new world.

The Battle of Armageddon signifies not only the destruction of evil nations or men, but also the victory of Christ over Satan and satanic forces. The conflict, however, will be the worst the world has ever seen (WTBTS, 1955c:11). At its end, Christ will relegate the Devil

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\*Christ's spiritual temple is comprised of the members of the Jehovah's Witnesses. This explanation of the drop-outs from the organization is the rationale given to Rutherford's purge and the voluntary exodus of persons from the Society in 1918 (see above, page 12).



and the demons to the abyss. This is not construed to be the annihilation of Satan, but rather the Devil will be in a "deathlike state of inactivity" (WTBTS, 1958a:211). The cataclysmic holocaust of Armageddon, then, paves the way for the millennium which begins immediately following this great battle of Christ and Satan.

The Jehovah's Witnesses understand the millennium to be a literal thousand years in duration. During this period Christ will reign along with the help of the 144,000 invisible heavenly elect. This will be the composition of the ruling body of the universal organization of Jehovah. The "new earth" of the millennium is not a new globe, but a new social arrangement, the ideal theocracy.

The millennium is, in fact, a renewal or re-establishment of the old Edenic Paradise as it existed prior to the disobedience of Adam and Eve (WTBTS, 1958a:220). The earth will be populated by a special mandate from God to "replenish the earth" (WTBTS, 1953:331). Repopulation will also occur through a series of resurrections (Hoekema, 1965:315).

The millennium is also the "Day of Judgment" though this is a thousand year day and not a literal 24-hour day. During this time only those who live during the millennium will be judged. Judgment is on the basis of actions during the millennium, not conduct before earthly death. Some "... still may refuse to serve God. Anyone who refuses to obey God's kingdom after a long-enough trial will be put to death.... Such a one is sentenced to destruction before the end of the thousand-year reign of Christ Jesus" (WTBTS, 1958a:237).

But even this is not the final judgment. After Christ's thousand year reign, Jehovah will once again assume command and initiate



the final test. This will come about when Jehovah releases Satan from the abyss. Satan, unchanged for his thousand years banishment, will try to lure men away from Jehovah. Some will succumb. These will be totally destroyed.

Finally, Satan and his demons will be cast into the lake of fire and sulphur (Revelation 20:10 NWT). This will be the final annihilation of the satanic beings. "This lake is the symbol of the 'second death' from which there is no resurrection at all" (WTBTS, 1958a: 239).

Thus, in the final analysis, there will be two distinct states of everlasting life. The 144,000 elect dwell through all eternity as spirit creatures with Christ in heaven. The resurrection of the last of this group will be completed by the end of the millennium, thus consolidating the marriage of Christ to his bride (WTBTS, 1953:322).

Those who are not among the Anointed but who prove faithful to Jehovah through all tests will inhabit the re-established paradise on earth, a paradise which will be the utopian theocracy of Jehovah. The theocracy will be ruled by Christ and the elect. All sorrow will cease. Sickness, tears, religious confusion and other forms of evil will be abolished. All will be everlasting happiness and bliss as Jehovah is worshipped and one gives oneself in loving and unselfish service to one's fellow man (WTBTS, 1953:361).

### III

#### THE WITNESSES IN ACTION

The Watch Tower Society is difficult to describe concisely as





an operating organization\* because there is no detailed work available on the internal functioning of the sect. In spite of this difficulty, a brief sketch based on obtainable data is necessary in order to make certain comparisons between the American Watch Tower Society and the Kitawala.

As was mentioned above, Jehovah's Witnesses conceive of their organization as a Theocratic society. This society is the earthly organization of Jehovah "providing in the present age the same sort of inspired leadership that was given by the Apostles in the very early days of Christianity" (Pike, 1954:88).\*\* Jesus Christ himself is the King and the "remnant" (i.e., all members of the organization) represents the visible rule of Jehovah.

Because of their pre-eminent commitment to the Kingdom of God, the Theocratic society of Jehovah, the Witnesses refuse to yield allegiance to any government or country. Their official stance is that they do not support the government of any country, but at the same time they are not seditious toward the authorities. Witnesses do pay taxes as it is biblical to "render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's". They openly resist authority only where governmental rules infringe upon prior personal commitment to the Kingdom of God. Witnesses take no active part in government or community services. The Witnesses do not have so much an anti-political ideology as one which is apolitical. As

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\*For the most comprehensive treatment of these aspects of the Jehovah's Witnesses, see Stroup (1967) and Pike (1954).

\*\*The Jehovah's Witnesses trace their history from Abel, through various Old Testament patriarchs and New Testament apostles to the present organization of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society (WTBTS, 1959:8).



the Theocratic society is under the guidance of Jehovah, and the Witness organization alone represents His Kingdom, all other governments must be under the leadership and control of Satan. This, then, is the rationale for the Witness refusal to serve in the armed forces (a policy of neutrality, not pacifism), salute a national flag, sing a national anthem, etc.

The Witnesses view every person in their organization as a minister, though there is no such thing as an ordained clergy or priesthood in the society. Ideally, this arrangement emphasizes the overall equality of the Witnesses; no one person is above or below another; there are no lay and clerical classes. (In fact, there is the president of the Society who obviously holds effective control of the organization.)

However, ministers are divided into two categories on the basis of whether or not they work full time for the organization. Pioneers are those persons who are in full time service which includes those who devote a minimum of 100 hours a month or 1200 hours a year to the cause. Pioneers may receive minimal financial assistance from the Society, but more often than not are unpaid devotees. "Special Pioneers" are those who are given special assignments in such areas as starting new congregations, lending temporary help to a congregation which has a particular need, etc.

"Publishers", on the other hand, are those who devote only their spare time to the activities of the Watch Tower Society. Their activities are similar to those of the Pioneers; distribution of literature door-to-door and on the street, open air preaching, personal house calls, etc. At regular intervals, both Publishers and Pioneers





are required to report their activity to their headquarters.

While Publishers and Pioneers find their individual niche in the Society, the basic collective unit of organization is the congregation. Each congregation has a territory assigned to it, and the ministers who comprise the group are responsible for the ongoing activities of the Witnesses in that specific region. The Watch Tower headquarters supplies each congregation with literature for distribution and also for the purpose of the continuous religious education of the members. The most widely known of the publications of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society are the periodicals Watchtower and Awake!, which are published bi-weekly and are distributed to the public at large.

The Witnesses practice baptism by immersion, though sprinkling is sometimes done for the aged or infirm. Russell instituted baptism as a Witness practice at the Society's first national convention, held in Chicago in 1893 (Stroup, 1967:143). At this time, the ceremony was held in a Baptist church. The candidates wore white robes, symbolic of purity of heart.

Presently, the Baptismal service is more informal. Public swimming pools have replaced Protestant churches as the site and white robes have been exchanged for bathing suits.

In 1940, at Detroit, approximately 3,500 were immersed in the public pool at Eastwood Park. The ceremony was performed by Witness friends of those baptised. All were dressed in bathing suits, so that a good swim could follow the ... ceremony. (Stroup, 1967:143)

Witnesses baptize only adults as young children cannot know "the truth". The ceremony has no theological content, but is observed only because Christ said it should be done (Stroup, 1967:144).



The "Memorial Supper" of the Witnesses corresponds to that which Protestants term "Communion" or "the Lord's Supper". The Memorial Supper takes the place of the Jewish Paschal Supper and is celebrated at the same time of the year. The "elements" consist of a loaf of bread or water crackers, and wine. Following prayer and Scripture reading, the elders, who are usually the Pioneers, distribute the bread and wine to the other participants.

Through the Memorial Supper some of the Witnesses become especially devoted to 'the cause'. The Supper unifies the group's emotions and purposes. While the rite of baptism is taken rather lightly, the Memorial Supper is always celebrated in a deeply thoughtful manner. Some members feel particularly close to Jesus during and after the observance of 'the feast'. (Stroup, 1967:146)

In summary, then, the practical activities of the Jehovah's Witnesses in America are almost exclusively confined to spreading the gospel of the Kingdom of God. Except for times when they run afoul of the government for one reason or another, the Jehovah's Witnesses do not participate in society as a whole. They are in society, but are not of society. Why bother with the evil affairs of the world when Armageddon and the impending victory of Jehovah over Satan are "just around the corner"?



## CHAPTER THREE

### THE WATCH TOWER MOVES TO AFRICA

The establishment of the Watch Tower in Africa is particularly obscured by the fact that there are nearly as many differing accounts of the African inception of the movement as there are writers to offer them. Some authors such as Kaufmann (1964:59) and Shepperson and Price (1958:152) mention Liberia as a possible area of independent missionizing. However, both sources agree that South Africa was the bridgehead for Watch Tower influence in Africa.

Kaufmann (1964:59) suggests that the Watch Tower movement had reached Africa by 1888. This, however, is a dubious claim for three reasons: (a) More reliable data indicate that the Watch Tower did not reach Africa until after the turn of the century (Shepperson and Price, 1958:152); (b) the Watch Tower Society lacked the organization necessary to conduct overseas missions at this early date; (c) Russell's first trip abroad for the purpose of establishing overseas missionary activity was not until 1901, and even this was directed toward Europe.

Andersson (1958:247) and Quick (1940:217) both cite the "end of the last century" as the date of Watch Tower infusion into Africa. Quite apart from the vagueness of these accounts, the date suggested is still somewhat in advance of the establishment of the African branch of the Watch Tower.

Most authors rather than give misinformation simply avoid the issue of how the Watch Tower came to Africa. One exception is Andersson (1958:247) who claims that Henry M. Turner, a bishop in the black American Methodist Episcopal Church, introduced the Watch Tower to





Africa. Though, as we shall see below, Turner had interests in the movement, he was not initially responsible for taking the Watch Tower doctrine to Africa.

It seems, however, most likely that the original agent of the Watch Tower in South Africa was Joseph Booth, who brought the movement to Africa sometime between 1906 and 1907 (Shepperson and Price, 1958:152-53; Hooker, 1965:92; Kaufmann, 1964:69). We must understand the association of Booth with the Watch Tower Society in order to comprehend the diffusion of the movement in Africa.

#### The Controversial Joseph Booth

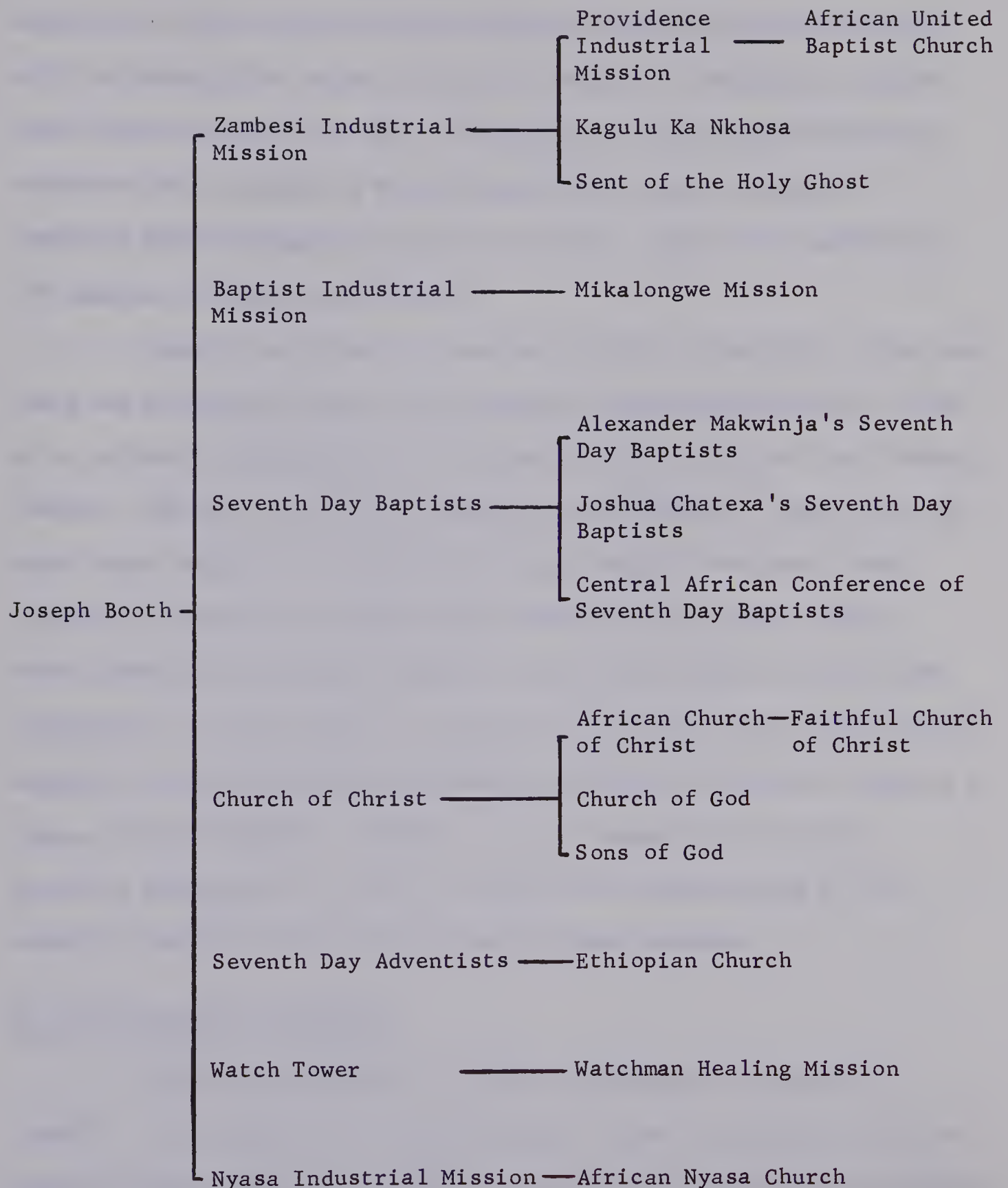
Joseph Booth was an Australian Baptist who felt a call to missionize Africa (see Shepperson and Price (1958) for a complete account of Booth's African exploits). He sold his restaurant business in Australia and in 1892, at the age of forty-one, arrived in Cape Town.

Booth's original idea was to establish a series of industrial missions, for it was his firm conviction that the working man held the key to the "salvation of Africa" (Shepperson and Price, 1958:25). His first endeavor was the Zambesi Industrial Mission. In 1896, because of sustained conflicts with European supporters of the Mission, Booth severed relations with the mission he had founded. This was the first in a sequence of seven missions or denominations with which Booth allied himself in Africa (see illustration on page 35). The sixth in this series of missions was the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.

Oddly enough, Booth's first contact with the Watch Tower doctrine was not in America, but in Scotland in 1906. He had gone to Scotland "... probably with the object of seeking fresh help from the



# DEVELOPMENT OF SECTS IN NYASALAND



This diagram, taken from Wishlade (1965:13) is not in complete accordance with the data presented in this study. Nevertheless, it adequately illustrates the effect which Booth had on the separatist church scene in Central Africa.





kind of people who supported him in 1895 at the inception of the Baptist Industrial Mission of Scotland" (Shepperson and Price, 1958:150). In addition to this, Booth felt that there was something radically wrong with the message that those who did not come to a knowledge of Christ would suffer eternally in hell. Consequently, when some followers of the Watch Tower Society in Scotland gave Booth some of Russell's pamphlets which claimed that there is no hell, Booth left immediately for America to confer with Russell.

Russell was greatly impressed by Booth's missionary vision and there are indications that Booth returned to South Africa early in 1907 as an official representative of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society (Hooker, 1965:92). From the headquarters established in Cape Town, the Watch Tower doctrine and literature spread rapidly northward toward Nyasaland, Rhodesia, and across the border into the Belgian Congo. Booth directed the movement only for a short time, and then only from headquarters in South Africa. The man in the front lines of Watch Tower expansion toward Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia was a native African, a Tongan, Elliott Kamwana. However, we must suspend the historical narrative temporarily in order to clarify our understanding of the nature of the Watch Tower Society and Kitawala movement.

#### From Watch Tower to Kitawala

The term "Kitawala" is a Bantu rendering of the English "tower". It is impossible to say with any degree of certainty when the gradual change began which marked the evolution of the Kitawala movement from its predecessor, the Watch Tower Society in Africa. To speak, as a great many writers do, of the Watch Tower as being transformed into the



Kitawala is very misleading. Most writers, however, treat the Watch Tower Society in Africa and the Kitawala movement as being the same phenomenon. Hooker (1965) is exceptional in that he makes a definite distinction between the two groups. According to him, the Jehovah's Witnesses were those who were sponsored by, and maintained effective relations with, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. On the other hand, the Watchtowerites, a movement known initially as the Kitawala in the Congo, maintained no official ties with the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society.

The fact remains that two distinct sets of people were concerned at all times, in all places, though the distinction was clearest where Witnesses operated with the least difficulty, in Nyasaland, where there were two distinctive sects, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, the members of which style themselves "Jehovah's Witnesses", and the native-controlled "Watchtower". The former of these is controlled by a European; the latter is an off-shoot of the original society and is not organized by it. Literature published by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, however, is also used by the native-controlled "Watchtower". (Hooker, 1965:92)

The problem which arises with regard to this distinction made by Hooker is of the utmost significance. There are two possibilities. The first is that the remainder of the writers who contribute data on the Kitawala and the Watch Tower Society in their respective activities in central and southern Africa either do not recognize this distinction, or have obscured it by over-generalization. An alternate explanation suggests the second possibility. Hooker, who published his article in 1965, may have witnessed a division between the Watch Tower Society and the Kitawala which did not occur early enough for previous ethnographers





to observe.

Yet the Royal Commission reporting on disturbances in the Copperbelt must have been vaguely aware of the possible difference between the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Watchtowerite movement, though the report minimizes and blurs this distinction. The authors write:

An attempt was made to differentiate between the Watch Tower Movement and Jehovah's Witnesses, so far as Northern Rhodesia is concerned. It is clear, however, that no such difference exists in the minds of the native population. Jehovah's Witnesses attend Watch Tower meetings and correspond with the headquarters of the Watch Tower in Cape Town; and they are regarded by the native population as leaders of the Watch Tower. (RRC, 1935:42)

Still earlier, however, in 1926, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society was quite aware of the native-run Kitawala and denounced all affiliation with this movement (Hooker, 1965:92). It seems to me that this denial on the part of the Watch Tower Society may have been more of a political expedient than a de facto practicality. The native-controlled movement was an embarrassment to the Watch Tower Society vis à vis the colonial governments, for the Kitawala was openly subversive to colonial authority, whereas the Watch Tower Society officially remained neutral. But it is quite obvious that the Watch Tower Society was not so at odds with the Kitawala as to refuse to send the latter Watch Tower literature or to discourage meaningful correspondence between the two groups.

That the Royal Commission report should state that so far as the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Watchtowerites are concerned, "no such difference exists in the minds of the natives", is significant.





Conversely, from the analytical viewpoint of Hooker and the official viewpoint of the Watch Tower Society, such a distinction is a definite necessity.

Thus, for the purpose of this enquiry, I shall accept Hooker's distinction between the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Watchtowerites or Kitawala. Notwithstanding this distinction, the Kitawala does rise historically from the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society whose doctrines and beliefs have been expounded in Chapter Two. Therefore my further analysis of the Kitawala will emphasize the other sources of the movement.

#### The Political and Social Sources of the Kitawala

The achievement of a satisfactory understanding of the Kitawala as a native-controlled entity demands an appreciation of the political and social content of the movement. Yet, the transition which took place as the Kitawala sprang up from the missionizing of the Watch Tower Society is rather difficult to document. How did the religious sectarianism of Pastor Russell become transformed in Africa to the point of becoming a radical politico-religious movement?

There seem to be three independent, but converging, sources from which the political and social content of the Kitawala developed. The first of these is Joseph Booth. From the outset of his mission ventures, Joseph Booth espoused a philosophy which was later condensed in the slogan "Africa for the Africans". His zeal is indicated in an early letter to the secretary of the Zambesi Industrial Mission.

Candidly now, is it not a marvellous picture to see elegantly robed men, at some hundreds of pounds yearly cost, preaching a gospel of self-denial to men



and women slaves, with only a very scrap of goat skin round their loins, compelled to work hard from daylight to dark.... I have never felt so utterly ashamed of myself and my countrymen as I have since coming here. Either we ought to stop spreading the Gospel or conform to its teaching amidst such a needy cloud of witnesses as Central Africa presents. (Shepperson and Price, 1958:33)

In his book, Africa for the Africans, Booth further expounds his thoughts on the injustice of the European partition of Africa. Booth saw that the imposition of the Europeans on Central Africa effectively reduced the Africans to a position of social, economic, political and religious inferiority. He advocated the payment of higher wages to African laborers and a more powerful voice for the African in his internal affairs. He preached against excessive taxation which kept the African subservient to the Europeans.

In 1899, Booth formulated a petition which he sent to the Queen. This petition demanded:

First, that the entire amount of the hut tax in the Protectorate should be spent on African education 'to the point of equality with the average British education'; secondly, 'that a pledge be given from your Government that this Protectorate shall never pass from the direct control of your Home Government unless it be to restore the Territory to an approved Government'; thirdly, that free higher education should be provided for not less than five per cent of the African population to qualify it for 'Government, professional, mechanical or mercantile operations'; fourthly, that the whole Protectorate should revert to native ownership after twenty-one years; and fifthly, that Africans from British Central Africa should not be forced to bear arms against neighboring tribes or elsewhere in Africa. (Shepperson and Price, 1958:120)





All in all, Booth expounded a political philosophy which was viewed by some Europeans as too Bolshevistic and also came too close for them to the encouragement of African nationalism.

As Booth gained more years of experience in Africa, his political philosophy apparently became more radical. A certain portion of this undoubtedly came about because of the progressive polarization of Booth in opposition to the colonial authorities. By the time Booth was a proponent of Watch Tower doctrine he was in such vehement opposition to the colonial administrations that he dared not enter the Rhodesias, the Congo, or Nyasaland for fear of government action against him. This was the major reason for Kamwana becoming the on-the-spot exponent of Watch Tower teachings in Nyasaland, though Booth oversaw the operation from South Africa.

Nevertheless, it appears evident that Booth's preaching, by the time of his association with the Watch Tower Society in 1907, contained as much of a political and social philosophy of African nationalism as a religious message. As a matter of fact, it is highly unlikely that Pastor Russell understood the full impact of his own words when he wrote that "Brother Booth's zeal for the black brethren has had the effect of stimulating our own interest in them, not only in Africa but also amongst the coloured people of the United States" (Shepperson and Price, 1958:153). "Brother Booth's zeal" held latent within it, as much of a political undercurrent as a religious one.

When Kamwana met Booth at the Cape in 1907, and underwent some six months of instruction in Watch Tower teachings, he very likely received concomitant instructions from Booth as to the political and social implications of the Watch Tower gospel. Kamwana was probably an



eager and willing student, particularly in view of the fact that he had left the Overtoun Institute in Nyasaland in protest against the introduction of school fees. He disagreed with colonial policy regarding educational fee assessments, taxation and the general economic and social advancement of the African (Shepperson and Price, 1958:154). This was the very "gospel" which Booth was preaching.

It seems evident, therefore, that from its very inception in Africa the Watch Tower doctrine had added to it elements of a political and social philosophy. As the movement spread, and in some areas came under native control in the form of the Kitawala, it underwent an even greater transition toward a political content at the hands of its indigenous exponents. Yet it retained a religious structure with religious symbolism.

A second source of the political and social orientation of the Kitawala was the activity and influence of Bishop Henry McNeal Turner of the African Methodist Episcopal Church of Philadelphia. The A.M.E.C. consisted entirely of American blacks who, among other things, were devoted to the political and social redemption of their African brethren (Shepperson and Price, 1958:73).

Bishop Turner made two trips to Africa, the first in 1891 to West Africa, then in 1898 to South Africa (Smith, 1964:183). His purpose for the 1898 trip was twofold: to lend a hand in the organization of the A.M.E.C. in South Africa, and to advance the cause of "Ethiopianism" in this area.\* The term "Ethiopian" appears to be used

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\*According to Sundkler (1961:53), Ethiopian churches are those which have seceded from White Mission Churches chiefly on racial grounds. Often the split also involves a seeking after prestige and





slightly differently by Andersson and Turner. For Andersson, 'Ethiopian' adheres closely to Sundkler's formal definition. In view of my present data, Turner personally offered no formal definition of "Ethiopian". However, if the stance of the A.M.E.C. is in any way representative of his personal view, the concept is more comprehensive than that of Andersson or Sundkler. The Ethiopian vision of the A.M.E.C. included the blacks of America as legitimate participants in Pan-Africanism. The A.M.E.C. was dedicated to the repatriation to Africa of America's Negro population.

Turner's aspirations for the development of the A.M.E.C. in South Africa did not materialize. Andersson claims that "when the open attack of the Ethiopian movement on the missions and the dominion of the Whites fell through, he (Turner) wanted to make use of the Watch Tower to spread the 'Ethiopian' gospel" (Andersson, 1958:247). Andersson seems to have grasped the basic idea of what occurred, but unfortunately his facts are confused.

First of all, Andersson is vague with regard to the date of the collapse of "Ethiopianism" and also when Turner turned to the Watch Tower Society. The former event definitely did not occur until well after Turner returned to America in 1898 (Smith, 1964:185). Second, Turner, while he was in Africa, could not have made contact with the Watch Tower movement, as Booth was unaware of the Watch Tower message

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power. "Their program as far as their relation to the White Churches is concerned, is characterized by an interesting ambivalence: on the one hand, it includes the slogan 'Africa for the Africans' and it is a reaction against the White mission's conquest of the African peoples; on the other hand, their church organization and Bible interpretation are largely copied from patterns of the Protestant Mission Churches from which they have seceded ..." (Sundkler, 1961:54).





until 1906. Third, Russell obviously had no definite plans for Africa before 1906, so Turner could not pick on the Watch Tower to carry the Ethiopian message to Africa in 1898.

Thus there appears to be no available documentation for any direct contact between Bishop Turner and Joseph Booth or between Turner and the Watch Tower Society in America, though such contact may well have been made. We know, however, that Booth was acutely aware of American Negro movements and the aspirations these groups had for Africa (Shepperson and Price, 1958:236). As these aspirations were similar to those of Booth, he probably adopted much of the American Negro propaganda. If we may accept Andersson's assertion (on the basis of German sources) that Turner "wanted to make use of the Watch Tower to spread the 'Ethiopian' Gospel", we may reasonably assume that even if Booth and Turner did not meet, they were aware of each other's views on the plight of the African.

The "Ethiopian" element, a direct or indirect contribution to the Kitawala by Bishop Turner and the A.M.E.C. as a whole, is clearly observable in the Kitawala. Quick (1940:218) writes that "the coming of Christ was associated with the influx of hosts of Americans into Africa. Motor-car symbolism took the place of chariots. Lake Mweru would boil and Europeans of the district would be cast into it." Kaufmann (1964: 94) indicates that the African adherents of the Kitawala were aware, albeit, vaguely, that their movement had a dual American origin, and believed that it would not be just Americans who would come to free Africans of the Europeans, but black Americans.

The third major factor contributing to the development of the Kitawala as a native-controlled movement has to do with the social



ambitions of the Kitawala adherents. Most of the adherents were young (Taylor and Lehmann, 1961:228). The Kitawala represented an opportunity in such native eyes for rapid social advancement. Cunnison (1951:468) claims that "the size of the organization--which is always stressed--is proof of wealth. America is believed to be the epitome of wealth."

The African adherents of the Kitawala have regarded the movement as a social panacea. Not only was there the prestige of belonging to a "wealthy" organization, but there was the possibility of eventually acquiring a position of leadership and importance. Quick says of the Kitawala:

As regards the social basis, those who belong to the movement segregate themselves from the rest of the community. The influence of color-bar legislation and practice in South Africa, racial discrimination in industrial employment, social segregation in church and community, together with the method of summary dismissal from employment, the ignominy of excommunication and the abrupt methods often adopted by the Europeans in economic contracts and social ties are contributing causes to social unrest and the impulse to form separate social units. The degree and manner of segregation reflects the changing attitudes of missions and government. (Quick, 1940:219)

Thus, the Kitawala is derived from at least four major interrelated components: first, there is the contribution of the American Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society which historically formed the nucleus of the religious structure and symbolism of the Kitawala; second, the Kitawala inherited a legacy of the radical "Africa for the Africans" policy of Joseph Booth; third, closely associated with the last-mentioned factor was the "Ethiopian" gospel propounded by the black American groups and zealously spread by Bishop Turner of the African





Methodist Episcopal Church of Philadelphia; fourth, there was the indigenous African utilization of the Kitawala as a "stepladder" to social success.

#### The Diffusion of the Kitawala

We resume our historical narrative in 1908 when Kamwana, after six months tutelage by Booth, began to proclaim the Watchtowerite message of political, social and religious redemption in Nyasaland.

Kamwana arrived back in Nyasaland in September of 1908 and concentrated on open-air preaching and baptisms. As opposed to the traditional missions which demanded a trial period of two years before baptizing Africans, Kamwana offered a quick baptism which was viewed as one route to social success.

A Livingstonia witness claims that in his key year, 1909, Kamwana baptized as many as ten thousand Africans in a few months. To them baptism was a simple Open Sesame to the new kingdom he preached. The emotional wave that he touched off was often accompanied by attempts to return to the old, pre-European tribal ways. This was noted with horror by the local missionaries who spoke in their publications and letters of a return to polygamy, of the revival of obscene dances, and the immoral old customs. They claimed, moreover, that the absence of any punitive concept of Hell in Kamwana's teaching added a distinct element of sexual licence to the movement. (Shepperson and Price, 1958:155)

The hut tax which had been imposed in 1901 was seized by Kamwana as an issue which served to unite both the tradition-oriented and the future-oriented Africans behind him. Kamwana used the apocalyptic teaching of the Watch Tower to agitate against the tax. He preached that a new age would come in October of 1914. "Christ would



come, all the whites would have to leave the country, and there would be no more oppression from tax gatherers" (Shepperson and Price, 1958:156).

The European missions and the colonial authorities took exception to the stir which Kamwana was creating. Thus, in June 1909, Kamwana was arrested and deported from the Protectorate until 1914. This move by the authorities broke the surging momentum of the movement as Kamwana's followers proceeded to splinter into a number of factions, some intent on maintaining close ties with the American Watch Tower Society, and others favoring the independence of native control. Even with this fission, however, the impact of Kamwana's movement was felt until 1912.

In the meantime, Booth defected from the Watch Tower Society, an event which further encouraged the breakdown of the original doctrinal content of the Society in Africa, and a concomitant eruption of the Kitawala. In response to this, in 1910, Pastor Russell dispatched William W. Johnston of Glasgow to investigate the situation in Nyasaland. Johnston gave an optimistic report of the work of the Society in Nyasaland, though he did recognize the increase in the number of African independent churches which had grown out of the Society. He was also successful in reconciling government authorities. But Johnston's report contained a number of other features indicating the social threads running through the movement. Johnston pointed out that amongst the native pastors of the Watch Tower

'There is manifest a spirit of cupidity and self seeking.... I pointed out that our work was the gathering-in of the Lord's saints together out of Babylon and their instruction in the words of the Lord only.' But many thought that he had come only to offer them 'lucrative employment' with the Society. Johnston went on: 'I regret to say that in almost every case





... their views ended with an appeal for financial assistance in some shape or form.... Many of them ... proposed that I should sign their labour certificate, a document indicating that they had worked for me for one month and therefore were entitled to three shillings in their hut tax.' (Shepperson and Price, 1958:157)

However, Johnston did not comply with the demands of the native pastors. And so, while he had entered the area amid the cheers and praises of the Watchtowerites, he was jeered and taunted as he left.

There is an interesting sidelight to this whole account. Evidently Booth was aware of the economic undercurrent in the separatist church movement in which he was involved. Johnston remarks concerning Booth that "having again switched his allegiance, Booth was now trying to win back some of the Kamwanaite Watch Tower leaders by sending them, from the Cape, Seventh Day Baptist Year Books with a £5 note inside each volume!" (Shepperson and Price, 1958:157).

To add to the confusion of the Nyasaland scene, Joseph Booth, though he had broken ties with the Watch Tower and joined the Seventh Day Baptists, sent to Nyasaland separatist churches copies of Bibles with Watch Tower commentaries. Booth seems to have felt that Pastor Russell produced literature as cheaply as anyone else, so why not take advantage of the situation (Shepperson and Price, 1958:161)?

As we look in retrospect at the entry of the Kitawala into Nyasaland, a most interesting commentary is offered by William Mulagha Mwenda. Mwenda was a political prisoner who wrote from Anse Royale in the Seychelles in 1926. The following text is quoted by Hooker (1965: 92).

You are aware that when Bro. Kamwana was sent to Nyasaland as a representative of





the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of America, he declared himself as such, but he didn't tell any of you that at that very time he, as was Bro. Booth, his sender, was also a secret representative of the Seventh Day Baptist Church, of America, and that when the late Pastor Russell, then President of the Society, had discovered their unfaithfulness to the Society, he suspended both of them and sent Bro. W. W. Johnstone in their stead-- whose serious report against Kamwanaism in Nyasaland has compelled the Society to abandon the harvest work you are still carrying there. A few months prior to their excommunication Bro. Booth quarrelled with Bro. Kamwana, therefore Bro. Kamwana separated himself from him and rejoined the Society; but as he saw that the Society had nothing to do with him any more he secretly changed the name of the Society in Nyasaland and called the Church the 'Watch Tower Churches of Christ' as you see it today. This happened at Durban.... To tell you the truth, the Society regards Bro. Kamwana as their chief enemy in Nyasaland ... (but) the Society's furiousness towards Kamwanaism is being done privately, whilst the Government's is being done openly through detentions and banishments.

This text, then, makes one of the most clear-cut distinctions between the activities of the Watch Tower Society and the Watchtowerites in Nyasaland. At the same time, it serves to demonstrate their inter-relationship.

In moving on to discuss the further diffusion of the Watchtowerites, I do not mean to imply that the activity of these groups suddenly ceased in Nyasaland. We shall presently return to discuss Kitawala activity after we trace the routes along which it spread.

Exactly how and when the Watchtowerite message spread from Nyasaland is not clear. Shepperson mentions a file from the National Archives of Rhodesia and Nyasaland which indicates Kamwana's presence in



Bulawayo in 1923 (Shepperson, 1963:91).

That Kamwana's name appears in this file at the center of an emerging Watch Tower movement in Southern Rhodesia in the early 1920's adds to his importance in the politico-religious history of Central Africa. His followers were spoken of officially as "Kenanites" and, although the Southern Rhodesian authorities decided not to ban the movement, they noted that at least one of its members at Wankie had dreamed that no taxes would have to be paid after Christmas, 1923. They observed that it had elements in common with John Chilembwe's movement in 1915 and sought information from the Nyasaland authorities. (Shepperson, 1963:92)

If Kamwana was already established in Bulawayo in 1923, the Watchtowerite message must have reached Southern Rhodesia sometime in advance of this date. The files of the government of Southern Rhodesia indicate that the authorities' first awareness of the Jehovah's Witnesses in their area of jurisdiction was in 1917 (Hooker, 1965:95). This leaves room for the speculation that there may have been still earlier movements of the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Watchtowerites into Southern Rhodesia, though the entire issue is too obscured for any reliable statement of such.

Hooker states:

Most of the Witnesses encountered in Southern Rhodesia were Atonga tribesmen who brought their tenets to the Rhodesian mines from Nyasaland. They agreed in externals with Presbyterian churches, using their hymnal, but were convinced of the impending destruction of the earth. Members spoke of "Elliott's church". Southern Rhodesian authorities argued that Witnesses were "Ethiopian", and in Salisbury the African location headman, James T. S. Manda, was fired when his membership became known. Deportations very quickly drove Witnesses underground





and the disappearance of the sect was presumed. (Hooker, 1965:95)

Hooker's statement, of course, demonstrates the general confusion in the minds of the Southern Rhodesian authorities regarding the Witnesses and the Watchtowerites.

As in Southern Rhodesia, the Kitawala spread to Northern Rhodesia via native migrant workers. This diffusion occurred around 1924 or 1925. It came to an early climax with the "Mwana Lesa" affair of 1926. "Mwana Lesa", the Son of God, whose real name was Tomo Nyirenda, was another Lakeside Tonga adherent of the Kitawala (Shepperson, 1963:92). By 1925, he was preaching at Mkushi in Northern Rhodesia. His gospel held the usual Kitawala prophecies, the liberation of Africa by black Americans, the expulsion of Europeans and confiscation of their property, and the establishment of free food dispensaries with the concomitant abolition of taxes. In addition, he spoke against adultery, stealing, and fighting and urged all the faithful to prepare for Christ's return.

Nyirenda had one further distinctive characteristic. He was a witch-finder, and practiced the divination of sorcerers by the "dipping" method. Exactly what this procedure entailed is not clear. Nevertheless, we do know that the determination of witches was by immersional baptism. Apparently Nyirenda drowned a number of persons in the process because the government captured and hanged him for murder late in 1926. According to Shepperson (1962b:157), Nyirenda "... is reported to have possessed a copy of Foxe's 'Book of Martyrs', whose pictures of the drowning of witches he would show to his congregations with the question that if Europeans could drown their witches why should Africans not do



the same?"

At about the same time that the Kitawala entered Northern Rhodesia, the movement spread to Katanga in the Congo. Deberty (1953: 266), though his facts are open to question, dates the emergence of the Kitawala in Katanga as 1923. At any rate, Andersson (1958:248) and Hooker (1965:100) point out that Nyirenda was also active here in 1925. As a matter of fact, his practice of "dipping" got him into trouble with the Katangan authorities from whom Nyirenda escaped before he was later caught and executed in Northern Rhodesia.

As a result of the Mwana Lesa affair the Watch Tower Society sent another investigator into the Rhodesias. In April 1926, upon recommendation of the investigator, the Watch Tower Society suspended its activities in the Rhodesias and in August of the same year, it likewise ceased activities in Nyasaland.

Was there any relationship between the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society and Tomo Nyirenda?

The Society claimed that there was none, pointing out that his group had been 'disfellowshipped', and that Nyirenda in fact had returned to Catholicism while in the condemned cell. The damage was done, though, and even Africans assumed a connexion: one who worked at Broken Hill, for example, wrote to his chief, Mause of Kota Kota, that all the trouble had been caused by the Watchtowerites, who had whispered through the villages that soon the whites would be expelled 'and then we shall be changed into white colour as white people and their ruling power shall be taken by us, white people will be our people and their wives will be married by us.' (Hooker, 1965:100)

In Katanga, the Belgians believed that orgiastic rites and Communist incitement of the native population were part and parcel of





the Kitawala. Deberty's (1953) whole historical account of the Kitawala in Katanga seems to be a frenzied indictment of the "perverse" qualities of the movement. However, the greatest reaction on the part of the Katanga authorities came in 1931 when many persons refused to buy food any more, claiming that the Americans would soon arrive and prices would fall. At this point the police escorted all suspect persons from the area.

#### The Kitawala After 1926

Following 1926, the Kitawala continued in conflict with the colonial authorities wherever the two came into contact. In Northern Rhodesia, the Witnesses and Watchtowerites were blamed for being partly responsible for the 1935 disturbances in the Copperbelt. Throughout the years of the Second World War, both Witnesses and Watchtowerites hindered the war effort by boasting "... of their exemption from military service and in some instances predicted salvation at German hands ..." (Hooker, 1965:103).

Following the war, the Kitawala as a native-controlled politico-religious movement seems to have slowly disappeared. The movement appears to have splintered into diverse groups in much the same way as the sparks from a fireworks display explode, scatter, and peter out. Each group followed its own independent leader, and when the leader ceased to function, the groups dispersed.

I suggest that there are four reasons for the disappearance of the Kitawala following World War II. First, realizing its pre-war error, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society began to exercise more stringent control over its African adherents when the Witnesses were allowed to





resume their activity after the war. Second, secular political nationalism emerged following the war with the consequence that there were other, more pragmatic methods of asserting political and social Pan-Africanism. New opportunities for leadership were also provided in this context. Third, with the deaths of the independent native leaders of the Kitawala, the various Watchtowerite groups fragmented largely because of a lack of new leaders to take over in place of those deceased. Fourth, the war launched a new era in African access to the material goods of the whites. The Kitawala was no longer necessary as a means of acquiring social prestige or economic well-being.

The activity of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society has not diminished. Though the Society's literature had been banned in the Rhodesias, Nyasaland and South Africa in 1940, by 1945 only Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland continued the ban and even they lifted it in 1946. Cunnison (1951:467) claims that in Central Africa, in 1950, about half the professing Christians were Watch Tower adherents. Taylor and Lehmann (1961:230) state that after the war, the Watch Tower not only ceased subversive activities, but is now actively in support of the government in Northern Rhodesia. However, recent editions of The Watchtower (e.g., February 1, 1968) lash out against native government persecution of the Witnesses in Malawi, formerly known as Nyasaland.

#### Kitawala Beliefs and Practices

The nucleus of Kitawala belief is a native-revised version of Watch Tower doctrine (primarily eschatology) coupled with the tenets of Ethiopianism. The slogan "Africa for the Africans" and the fact that the Kitawala is an offshoot of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society



exemplify the Ethiopian source of Kitawala belief. The millenarian aspect of Watch Tower doctrine is also an integral part of the Kitawala.

The apocalyptic element occupies a prominent place in Kitawala thought.

... The second coming of Christ is imminent, when organized Christendom will be destroyed; governments of the world will be overthrown; missions and mission churches will be brought to judgment; millions now living will never die. In striking symbolism, European agents at work in Africa are depicted as being full of abomination and uncleanness, the open enemies of Jehovah and His witnesses. Trouble will come upon the world; Jehovah will vindicate the righteous and destroy those who oppose His rule. (Quick, 1940: 217)

In the early stages of the movement, the "Watchman on the Wall" was the symbol around which the Kitawala adherents rallied. Quick (1940:218) feels that this emblem was symbolic of "the hopes and aspirations of a wronged people".

Adherence to the Kitawala was signified by immersional baptism and a public confession of faith. Communal eating was encouraged and glossalia was common in the meetings.

In some areas such as Northern Rhodesia, wife-changing and free love were practiced, the latter being regarded as "the supreme expression of unselfishness" (Hooker, 1965:104). As mentioned above, Mwana Lesa used baptism to determine which persons were witches.

Quick says of the Kitawala in Northern Rhodesia:

From the point of view of economics, one of the main characteristics of the movement is that it is entirely self-supporting, self-propagating and free from foreign control. Church and community organization are based on a rural economy.





Cassava gardens and finger-millet plots are cultivated, hoed, weeded and harvested on a communal basis. Relish is obtained either by the sale of surplus garden produce or from fishermen members of the group. Beer feasts are held periodically to which members from distant villages are invited. Members are exceedingly hospitable to one another. Food and shelter are provided for guests from distant villages and sister churches. (Quick, 1940:221)

Small meeting houses are built by communal labor and paid for by gifts from adherents.

### The Acceptance of the Kitawala in Africa

One final question remains. Why was the Kitawala so readily accepted by such large numbers of Africans previous to the Second World War? Ian Cunnison (1951:468) is particularly helpful as he answers this question for the Luapula Valley region of Northern Rhodesia. I feel that some of his conclusions may be generalized for most of Central Africa.

First of all, Cunnison claims that the Kitawala was "Ethiopian" in orientation, and therefore, by implication, anti-white. Though there was some foreign aid, missionizing was effectively controlled by the black adherents of the movement. The popular view of the Kitawala faithful was that the white missionaries had lied and purposely distorted the biblical message.

Cunnison's second reason, therefore, is that the Kitawala was anti-mission and anti-government, the two being viewed as similar white peas in the colonial pod.

Third, Cunnison thinks that there was ready acceptance into the ranks of the movement, as opposed to the arduous trial period which



the white missionaries imposed before baptism. This allowed for the rapid acquisition of social status and prestige due to the association of the Kitawala with the American Watch Tower movement.

Fourth, according to Cunnison, persecution which has been inflicted on the Kitawala was viewed as proof of the righteousness of its message.

Fifth, Cunnison suggests that specific points of Watch Tower doctrine were more acceptable to the African than the doctrine of the European missions:

- (a) The kingdom is at hand in this generation.
- (b) Only Witnesses will be accepted into the kingdom.
- (c) Life in the kingdom is earthly and not spiritual.
- (d) In the kingdom there will be an absence of all ills of this world.
- (e) In the kingdom, all women will have children.
- (f) The fact that in doctrine there is no room for the slightest doubt about anything.

To Cunnison's suggestions I shall add three further points which I think increased the acceptance of the Kitawala.

First, the Kitawala had access to the numerous publications of the Watch Tower Society. This satisfied the African demand for literature in indigenous dialects.

Second, the Kitawala allowed for the incorporation of certain traditional African beliefs into a body of doctrine which was backed by American prestige.

Third, the Kitawala provided ample opportunity for the development of individual leadership potential. This is especially significant in a situation where many Africans had attended mission schools and had received a fairly substantial education, but had no place to exercise the leadership potential which was awakened by schooling.





## CHAPTER FOUR

### TRIBAL SOCIETIES AND THE APPEAL OF THE KITAWALA

The data presented in Chapter Three raise an important question: Why was the Kitawala more readily accepted by some tribal groups than by others? In order to shed some light on this question, I shall attempt to make a brief comparison of the Lakeside Tonga and the Ngoni. Two of the persons most intimately associated with the Kitawala, i.e., Kamwana and Nyirenda, were Lakeside Tonga; and the Lakeside Tonga gave the Kitawala its first large scale support. On the other hand, the Ngoni, though living near the Tonga, and having been in close contact with the Tonga, largely rejected the message of the Kitawala.

#### I

#### THE LAKESIDE TONGA

##### Early History

Not much is known about the history of the Tonga before 1870. According to legends, the Tonga as a tribe emerged during the first half of the nineteenth century with the coming together of four groups: the peoples led by MANKHAMBIRA and KANGOMA from the north of the Luweya River, and the Phiri and Kapunda Banda from the region south of the river (Van Velsen, 1962:177). These groups eventually settled on the western shore of the northern half of Lake Nyasa.

Concerning the Tonga, Van Velsen (1959a:2) states that "the process of coalescence was speeded up in the third quarter of the nineteenth century through the external pressure of the Ngoni".





Mombera's Ngoni, whose ancestors under Mombera's father, Zwangendaba, had fled from the Zulu king Shaka, settled at this time near Ekwendeni and proceeded to raid the tribes in the surrounding area. This series of raids forced the Tonga to move from their outlying villages to seek the protection of larger fortified villages.

The Tonga were conquered by the Ngoni, for only about twenty or twenty-five years. About 1876-7, the Tonga rebelled against the Ngoni, and soundly defeated a Ngoni army at MANKHAMBIRA'S stockade on the Chinteché River, to which some Tonga had fled to withstand Ngoni reprisals.

Van Velsen notes that the Tonga "... never became wholly integrated with the Ngoni people like those tribal groups who had been absorbed into the Ngoni system in the earlier stages of the Ngoni wanderings and who had therefore been separated from their own tribes through time and space" (Van Velsen, 1959a:3).

1877 marked the beginning of prolonged contact between the Tonga and European missions, though Livingstone had been in the area as early as 1861. In 1878, observation posts were established at Kaningina and Bandawe by Laws and Stewart working for the Free Church of Scotland (Van Velsen, 1959a:4). From this time on the missions were destined to play a two-sided role in Tonga tribal politics. The missions were an element in the external politics of the Tonga vis à vis the Ngoni; at the same time, the missions played a part in the internal politics of the Tonga, headmen vying for the favor of the missions with regard to the goods which the missions distributed and the prestige of having a mission station established in their villages (1959a:8).

The colonial Administration was formally established in



Tongaland in 1897. The importance of this date cannot be over-emphasized as it may serve to correct a number of misconceptions concerning the relationship of the Tonga to the early missions and Administration. First of all, the missions, preceding the Administration by twenty or so years, did not enter Tongaland with military backing. Thus, they had to rely upon diplomacy in relations with the Tonga and Ngoni (Van Velsen, 1959a:4). This, of course, would be more compatible with Tonga thinking than with the Ngoni who tended to favor force as the basis for political maneuvering.

Secondly, the inference is often made (e.g., Shepperson and Price, 1958:154) that the arrival of the Administration played a crucial role in saving the Tonga from the Ngoni. Van Velsen says:

Some writers ... ascribe the continued existence of the Tonga people to the intervention of the Administration. This, however, is an anachronism, because by the time the Administration was established in this part of the country, in 1897, the danger that the Tonga might be "annihilated by the Ngoni" had passed. In fact the Ngoni gave so little trouble that the Administration left them alone. (Van Velsen, 1959a:5)

On the other hand, the literature repeatedly emphasizes that the Tonga took advantage of both the missions and the Administration to pry themselves away from Ngoni control (Shepperson and Price, 1958:154; Van Velsen, 1959a:9; Van Velsen, 1959b:117).

Finally, the impact of the Administration may not have been felt so acutely by the Tonga as it was by the other groups. This was because the Tonga seemed to adapt more readily to a cash economy than did the other tribes, which may have been largely because Tonga social organization allowed participation in village society while a person was





away working for wages. Thus, the Administrators in Tongaland "... were hardly involved in labor recruitment which made the task of Administrators so unenviable elsewhere. The Tonga had started their migration south in search of cash and goods in 1886, well before the arrival of the Administration" (Van Velsen, 1962:180).

Following the establishment of the Administration in Tongaland in 1897, the British, pursuing their informal policy of indirect rule, set about searching for "the traditional political seniority" of chiefs. The problem was that the Tonga had no chiefs as the British conceived of the position. Tonga leaders were headmen who held a position of meager authority by virtue of their ability to attract a following. But in 1917, the Administration appointed five of the headmen as Principal Headmen. These five were elevated above their peers for what, from the Tonga viewpoint, was no good reason. The result was an increased rivalry between the five favored Principal Headmen and the remaining headmen who were jealous of the prestige associated with the position of Principal Headman (Van Velsen, 1962:183).

Characteristically, the Tonga were quick to take advantage of the situation. Realizing that the British were looking for a Paramount Chief to whom they were prepared to turn over a large measure of authority, the Tonga headmen decided to provide one. In 1930, they petitioned the Resident Administrator for recognition of a Paramount. This petition was made on the basis that there was a historical precedent of a Paramount in Tonga tradition. Because the Tonga possessed no written history, this point was hard to argue against. On the other hand, the British were not about to argue as their inability to find a Tonga Paramount had always been an embarrassment to them (Van



Velsen, 1962:184).

The only problem was that the Tonga Principal Headmen could not agree over which one of them should assume the position of Paramount. Each wanted the prestige for himself. Finally, in 1933, instead of a Paramount, the British appointed two "Native Authorities" from the Principal Headmen (Van Velsen, 1962:185).

The early history of the dealings of the Administration with the Tonga is not a period wherein the British tried to impose a rigid form of government upon the Tonga. To a certain extent, the Tonga were given opportunity to negotiate with regard to the system of administration of the British. The system which evolved, then, did so by trial and error and was not "... without organic links with the local, social and political structure" (Van Velsen, 1962:179).

#### An Overview of Tongan Society

The period to which this description applies begins in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and ends approximately with the outbreak of World War II. The data presented here come almost exclusively from papers on Tonga history written by Van Velsen and to a lesser extent from documents based on his own field work which was done from 1952-1955.

The staple crop of the Lakeside Tonga was cassava. This crop was raised with relatively little hard labor and consequently the women were responsible for tending the fields (Van Velsen, 1964:13). The men, then, were free to labor in the mines of South Africa and the Rhodesias. Indeed, at any one time, "between sixty and seventy-five per cent of the adult males ... (were) absent whilst working abroad (viz. outside





Tongaland), the majority of them leaving their families behind" (Van Velsen, 1961:230). Because of the influx of cash from the mine workers, the Tonga had a relatively higher standard of living than neighboring tribes.

The Tonga did not raise cattle, nor did they keep sheep and goats. Occasionally a cow was bought and slaughtered for meat. The usual meat diet, however, consisted of chicken or fish, the latter being a delicacy.

Ideally the Lakeside Tonga were matrilineal and virilocal. Because residence was virilocal, most persons grew up in their father's village, and on a practical level patrilateral relationships were important. This was true to the extent that some persons may occasionally have inherited from their father's line (Van Velsen, 1964:74).

Another of the things which is recurrently stressed in the literature is that the Tonga were very independent and individualistic. Van Velsen (1962:178) states:

One of the most striking aspects of the Tonga is their marked individualism and the egalitarianism of their society. A man considers himself potentially as good as any other man, including a chief and he reckons that if he has no title yet, there is no reason to assume that he may not inherit one, or alternatively create one if he becomes important enough to make this mark and attract dependents.

Individualism was most evident in the rivalry between headmen where leadership depended upon the ability of a man to attract followers.

The problem, which is probably most important with regard to this study, is that of the political and social integration of the Tonga. There is a tendency to view Tonga society as lacking cohesion,





particularly because of the acephalous political structure which is traditionally characteristic of the group. Van Velsen says:

Ever since their first contact with Europeans the Tonga have been described as being given to incessant quarrelling and being ridden by 'mutual jealousies and ambitions' and of being 'the most prominent of all the (tribes in Nyasaland) both for intelligence and disputes.' Detailed analysis of the disputes and their relation to other events and actions, shows that they are not signs of disintegration as has often been assumed, but points to the factors uniting the intensely individualistic Tonga into an essentially egalitarian society. Indeed, while they may expose it to external penetration, these manifold quarrels and disputes have an integral place in this kind of society. (Van Velsen, 1962:178)

Van Velsen (1961:230) elsewhere points out that because there were no clear foci for social and political relationships, there was plenty of room in Tonga society for rivalry with regard to political office.

The integration of the Tonga was enhanced by three factors (Van Velsen, 1961:239). First, the white rulers of Africa did not view the African in terms of being a real wage earner. They saw him in the role of a migrant worker who may always have returned to his village. Secondly, the Tonga working abroad therefore maintained vital interest in the political and social functioning of their home village. Even though they may not actually have resided in their home village for a period of ten or twenty years, they were still involved in this community. In a very real sense, a Tongan abroad was always considered by the residents of his home village as an active participant in local political and social affairs. Thus, those abroad conceived "... of their social and economic security in the rural area in terms of traditional



Tonga values" (Van Velsen, 1961:240). Finally, the governing of the area in which the Tonga were located was based upon "tribal integrity". This meant that, to the extent which the Administration understood or determined the traditional tribal political structure, this structure was accepted and utilized as an effective means of government.

Van Velsen (1959a:13) mentions a point of further interest and of importance to our study. The Tonga were unusually receptive to the European concept of schooling. They were most willing to experiment with European ways which must have been strange and unfamiliar.

It is on record that within half an hour of announcing his (Dr. Laws) intention of opening a school, forty children had appeared and the numbers grew daily. In about 1889 there were 1330 pupils (of whom 700 were girls), and during the second half of 1896 the highest number of scholars present in one day was 5,006 whilst the average daily attendance was 4361. (Van Velsen, 1959a:13)

Teaching was done on a tutorial system where the more accomplished students taught the novices. All teaching was done in chiTonga and in 1883 Dr. Laws began selling chiTonga primers for one fowl each. Laws produced these primers himself.

But Laws' conception of education was even more all-encompassing than this. He wanted to train the Africans in manual arts, commerce, industry and agriculture as well as in strictly academic pursuits. Consequently, "when the Rev. MacAlpine arrived at Bandawe in 1894 he found brick houses with wooden door-frames and windows which had been made by Tonga industrial apprentices" (Van Velsen, 1959a:13).

It was not only European oriented schooling which prepared the Tonga for operating within the framework of a cash economy. European





consumer goods had been introduced to the Tonga and skills had been taught them which created a further desire for participation in such an economy. In this context, it was no accident that the Tonga supplied the majority of the industrial migrant labor force in South Africa and the Rhodesias.

Before drawing any conclusions about the propensity of the Tonga for accepting the Kitawala, I shall proceed to a brief description of the Ngoni.

## II

### MOMBERA'S NGONI

#### Ngoni Contact with the Tonga

The group of Ngoni with whom we are concerned is Mombera's Ngoni. This group was part of a larger group who were of Nguni origin. The larger group fled from Shaka's power sometime about 1820. They headed north across the Zambesi and eventually settled temporarily near the south end of Lake Tanganyika. Here Zwangendaba, the leader of the group, died in 1845 and the group split. Mombera emerged as the leader of one of the new groups. Mombera and his followers headed south towards Ekwendeni where they finally settled (Van Velsen, 1959b:113).

The Ngoni had moved northward originally in search of new pastures for their cattle and new peoples to raid. Situated in Ekwendeni, Mombera's Ngoni proceeded to raid the surrounding tribes which they viewed as a source of manpower and food. In this context we see the contact between the Ngoni and the Tonga. Most likely the Ngoni raided the Tonga exclusively for manpower because cassava, the staple



crop of the Tonga, is not harvested but remains in the ground until used.

The Tonga were conquered by the Ngoni sometime near the middle of the nineteenth century. As I pointed out above, this situation lasted only for about twenty years during which the Tonga never became wholly integrated with the Ngoni. Thus, we know that the Tonga and Ngoni were in fairly intimate contact with one another when the British Administration was imposed on the whole area. We also know on the authority of Shepperson and Price (1958:214) that the Watchtowerites missionized among both the Tonga and the Ngoni.

One of the most interesting points in the history of the Ngoni was their attitude toward the original missions in the area. Whereas the Tonga welcomed the advent of the missions, the Ngoni were opposed to them from the very beginning. Their reasons were twofold: "they considered themselves still the masters of the Tonga and did not want the Europeans to settle amongst their erstwhile subjects"; and also, "... they wanted a kind of preserve around Ngoniland where they could raid without foreign interference" (Van Velsen, 1959a:6).

Furthermore, the Ngoni expected the missions to help them against the Tonga. "The Ngoni often complained to the missionaries that the Tonga (had) ... run away with our children; we wish you to make them send back our children" (Van Velsen, 1959a:6).

The reason the Ngoni felt that the Tonga had stolen their children may perhaps have reflected the differing social organization of the two groups. The Tonga were matrilineal and the Ngoni patrilineal. Therefore, when the Tonga broke away from the Ngoni, the former undoubtedly expected that the children of Ngoni men and Tonga women captives ought to be Tonga. But the patrilineal Ngoni would contend



just as strongly that the children of such relationships ought to be Ngoni. Nevertheless, when the missions would not step in to comply with Ngoni requests for "our" children, Ngoni relations with the missions deteriorated.

Even though the Tonga were no longer subjects of the Ngoni, the latter continued raiding in Tonga territory until about 1887. The Tonga (who had more or less sided with the missions) pressured the missions to strongly oppose the Ngoni raids. The missions, however, had no military backing, and since the Ngoni represented a prime mission field, the missions did not particularly want to see their relations with the Ngoni worsen.

The situation was even more explosive because the Ngoni wanted the missions to settle in Ngoniland. This was apparently because some Ngoni wanted to acquire the European goods which the missions distributed. Thus, the missions were caught in a web of tribal politics; if they stayed with the Tonga, the Ngoni threatened to attack both the Tonga and the missions; if they moved to the Ngoni, they would lose their good relations with the Tonga.

In 1887, Dr. Laws made a last-minute attempt to reach an agreement with the Ngoni. By promising to open a new mission station among the Ngoni, war was averted. This agreement marked the end of political trouble between the Ngoni and the missions (Van Velsen, 1959a: 12).

#### An Overview of Ngoni Society

This description applies approximately to the same period as the Tonga data. Mombera's Ngoni were cattle herders who also carried on





a certain amount of subsistence cultivation. Land was used until exhausted and then the group moved on in search of new land. Warfare before the 1880's had played an important role in Ngoni economics as raids used to be carried out to secure additional food and manpower. After the 1880's, however, due to the influence first of the missions and then of the Administration, warfare disappeared and the Ngoni no longer migrated as a group.

Cattle represented one of the chief economic and ritual entities among the Ngoni. Meat, blood and milk were integral items of Ngoni diet. In addition, cattle were important in the payment of lobola or bridewealth. Cattle could also be readily converted into cash in the days after European presence encouraged a cash economy. Cattle have traditionally been the sign of wealth and prestige in Ngoni society (Read, 1956:173).

Ngoni were traditionally patrilineal in descent and residence was virilocal (Read, 1956:18). Ancestors were revered particularly by the aristocratic Swazi and trans-Zambesi clans (Read, 1956:157). Here again cattle played an integral role in Ngoni social organization as ancestors could not be addressed except through the cattle (Read, 1956:158). The Ngoni were a people deeply conscious of their own history and consequently traced lines of kinship and descent with precision. Their world view was past-oriented. They looked back to their idea of a golden age when they were tribal overlords, unlike the Tonga who looked forward to the "new conditions which had freed them from Ngoni suzerainty" (Shepperson and Price, 1958:212).

The Ngoni were closely integrated around the figure of the Paramount chief, the age set system, and warfare. The Paramount was the



symbol of Ngoni political unity. He was the commander-in-chief of the army who acquired all the spoils of war. Read sums up the Ngoni concept of the Paramount:

The Ngoni Paramounts were more than ruling monarchs; they were the symbol of the unity of their state; in pre-European days the Paramount was the head of the army; and the ritual at the accension and at the death of a Paramount was related to the fertility of the land and the prosperity of the people. (Read, 1956:17)

The Ngoni political system, then, was highly centralized; the Paramount, holding ultimate authority, was at the top of a pyramid political structure with lesser chiefs beneath.

The age-set system was another cohesive element in Ngoni society. Boys born within a certain number of years (usually three or four) of each other belonged to the same age set. These sets usually formed a regiment in the army. From early boyhood the young males of the community were encouraged to fight and learn the arts of self-defense. By the time the boys reached the age of warriors, they had formed lasting associations with other members of their age set. It was this comradeship in fighting and love of war that served as a major force for solidarity within the age sets.

Warfare itself and the spirit of conquest were further factors which integrated the Ngoni. According to Read (1956:41), warfare had three main purposes among the Ngoni: to extend tribal boundaries, to retain tribal independence and to maintain internal stability.

Though they do not directly state so, Van Velsen (1959a:13) and Shepperson and Price (1958:154) imply that the Ngoni did not accept schooling as readily as the Tonga. Though this may have been partly

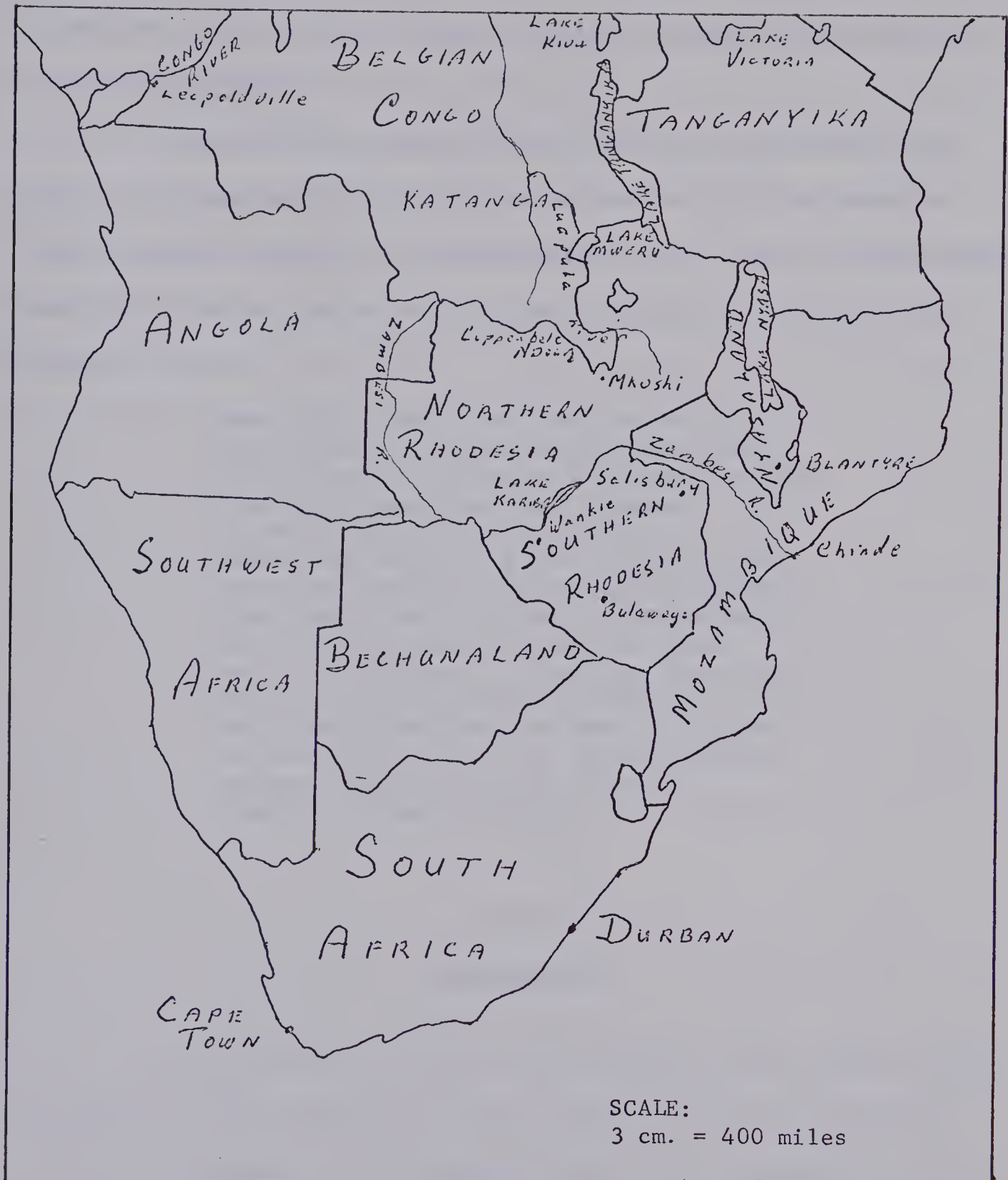






MAP OF NYASALAND IN 1900  
(Shepperson and Price, 1958:565)





MAP OF SOUTH AND CENTRAL AFRICA



true, Omer-Cooper (1966:82) claims that with regard to schooling, Ngoni "... competition came to take the place of service in the regiments, and in 1896 there were already twenty-one schools taught by local teachers in Mombera's kingdom".

I would like to make one final observation concerning the Ngoni. In comparison to the stressed individualism of the Lakeside Tonga, the Ngoni seemed to be more group-oriented. Read, in describing some of the dominant values of the Ngoni explains the feeling of the Ngoni as follows:

Among these so-called group values the first of all, and pre-eminent above all, was the value of keeping together. Taught by bitter experience that personal quarrels could lead to political secessions and to the diminution of the power and influence of the Ngoni kingdoms, the focus of much of their thinking was on maintaining cohesion whether in small units or in large. I think the Ngoni were the only people in Nyasaland where individuals and families were not allowed to leave the villages to live elsewhere without permission of the chief or headman. (Read, 1959:152)

### III

#### CONCLUSIONS

We are now able to attempt some answers to the question which was outlined at the beginning of this chapter. Why was the Kitawala more readily accepted by the Lakeside Tonga than by the Ngoni? The answers to this query will help us to understand the type of social milieu which might foster a movement such as the Kitawala, as opposed to those milieux which would be incompatible with the movement.





### The Internal Structure of the Tribes

First, let us consider the internal tribal structure of the Tonga and the Ngoni. The political integration of the Tonga was very loose in comparison to the highly formalized and centralized political organization of the Ngoni. In this context, the very fact that the prime qualification for a Tongan headman was the ability to attract followers is one reason for a compatibility of the Tongan political structure with the character of the Kitawala. As has been indicated, primarily in the persons of Booth, Kamwana and Nyirenda, the message of the Kitawala was borne along by the ability of each to attract adherents. Furthermore, the leadership of the Kitawala was decentralized and individualized. Thus, the type of leadership opportunity which the Kitawala offered was something wholly understandable to the Tongan and synonymous with his image of leadership.

The Ngoni, on the other hand, looked to the Paramount for leadership. Political power and authority were focussed in his office. The likelihood of the Ngoni sympathy for, or understanding of, the Kitawala concept of leadership is minimal.

Second, the lack of means of strict control by the Tonga headmen made the Kitawala an excellent tool for mitigating against their authority. The Kitawala claimed only biblical authority. The institutionalized tendency for individual Tongans to break off from one village (and consequently from the village headman) and to establish a new village brought about the founding of some villages which were entirely "Kitawala".

A third fact to note is that an individual Tongan could function as an integral part of the social and political life of his



village, even though he might be geographically removed from his village. The Tongan migrant laborers therefore had greater opportunity for contact with Watchtowerite doctrine, as much of the original Watchtowerite missionizing was done in the mining areas where Tongans worked. Conversely, the Ngoni had a propensity to remain within the confines of their own group.

Fourth, the Tonga saw in the Kitawala a ready-made opportunity for social and economic advancement. This was an important issue to a group who became oriented toward a cash economy so early in their history. However, the group-oriented society of the Ngoni directed individuals inward toward participation in a more or less isolated Ngoni world. While they valued European goods, the Ngoni did not become involved in the fervent quest for individual economic status to the same extent as the Tonga. In other words, the Ngoni did not strive to participate in the cash economy of the Europeans until much later than the Tonga. Thus, the economic and social aspect of the Kitawala did not offer any great incentive to the Ngoni who were content to pursue these goals in more traditionally acceptable ways.

Fifth, the Ngoni looking-back to their golden age would be incompatible with the Kitawala prophecy of the future millennium. How could Ngoni ancestors, who played such an important role in everyday Ngoni affairs, be attributed a place in a future golden age which retained little from the past? However, Kitawala eschatology, idealized as a more or less egalitarian black society, must have appealed to the majority of the Tongans.

Finally, while it is tempting to argue that the principle of fission of the Tonga is an additional reason for susceptibility to the





Kitawala encroachment, it is also true that this process was equally characteristic of the Ngoni. Barnes (1954:57) describes fission as "... the process by which a social group divides into two or more distinct groups, so that the original group disappears as a social entity". However, the only possible point which would validate any differential susceptibility on this issue would be that while the Ngoni group undergoing fission retained a historical link with their past, the Tongan groups did not maintain such a nexus.

### External Tribal Relations

I shall discuss the relations of the Tonga and the Ngoni with regard to two external groups: the missions and the Colonial Administration. Did the European missions or the Colonial Administration have any effect upon the Tonga acceptance and Ngoni rejection of the Kitawala?

First of all, the Ngoni had significant reasons to distrust any mission group. The more orthodox European missions and the Colonial Administration went hand in hand. With the coming of both into the world of the Ngoni and the Tonga, a change of relationship between the two tribes is evident.

Shepperson and Price (1958:154) point out that "the Tonga had once been dominated by the Ngoni. But, after the coming of the Livingstonia Mission, many Tonga put themselves under the mission's safe-keeping. The arrival of the new Administration, through the control of Ngoni military power which it achieved, added to this protection." We know, however, from our historical sketch of the Tonga that they were not saved from the Ngoni by the missions, but "put themselves under the mission's safe-keeping" in the sense that they used



the missions politically against the Ngoni.

This alliance with the missions seems to have given the Tonga greater initial access to mission school training than the Ngoni had. This has a number of important implications.

The Tonga used the opportunity which the mission schools gave them of "out-maneuvering" the Ngoni in a world increasingly dominated by the whites. The Tonga seized these opportunities to achieve higher social status and more rewarding economic benefits. But the European missions still retained effective control of the churches. The great significance of the Kitawala at this point is that it allowed the Tonga control over their own churches and at the same time maintained a direct and prestigious connection with the white American leaders of the Watch Tower. In this sense, they enjoyed a degree of autonomy vis à vis the Europeans which the Ngoni had not even developed.

Another important result of mission education is that the Tonga became largely literate. This new literacy generated a new demand for their own literature on the part of the Tonga. The fact that Dr. Laws had developed a chiTonga primer and consequently the Tonga could read chiTonga undoubtedly led to the specific request for literature written in this language.

This was a situation with which the Kitawala was uniquely equipped to deal. The Kitawala had unlimited access to Watch Tower literature. As previously mentioned, the policy of the Watch Tower was to publish material in native languages and dialects as soon as possible after moving into a new area--a policy which the European missions did not pursue. Thus, the Watch Tower Society, after about 1910 enjoyed a virtual monopoly in the provision of literature to the Tonga.





A further effect of the early European missions is that they impressed upon the minds of their African adherents the authority of the Scriptures. This point would undoubtedly apply doubly to the Tonga because so many of them were educated in mission schools.

Thus, the pattern of biblical authority was quite familiar to the Tonga before they had any contact with the Kitawala. The Watchtowerite preachers had simply to provide a new interpretation of the Scriptures, but did not encounter the problem of having to establish the Bible as a new source of authority. Of course, the Pan-African bias of the Kitawala propaganda was compatible with Tongan political and social desires. Thus, the work of the earlier "orthodox" missions indeed aided the cause of the Kitawala. It seems that the established missions' complaint that Booth was in effect "stealing converts", which the earlier missions had worked on for a number of years, was a common complaint, not only directed against Booth, but against the Watch Tower movement in general (Shepperson and Price, 1958:35).

A further point concerning the influence of earlier missions on the Tonga and Ngoni is relevant. The traditional rivalry between these two tribal groups was heightened in the first third of the twentieth century by the fact that there was a newly generated religious rivalry between them. Trouble between the Ngoni and the Tonga persisted "... in the veiled form of rivalry between the Watch Tower factions who were dominated by the Tonga ... and the Seventh Day Baptist group of Africans, amongst whom was a considerable number of Ngoni" (Shepperson and Price, 1958:214). It is interesting to note that both the Watch Tower and Seventh Day Baptist teachings were brought to Africa and initially propagated by the same person--Joseph Booth. His allegiance





to the Seventh Day Baptists preceded his adherence to the Watch Tower. What led the Ngoni to accept Booth's propagation of Seventh Day Baptist doctrine and to reject the Kitawala? Part of the answer may lie in the fact that a large part of Kitawala missionizing was carried on by Kamwana, a Tongan. Therefore the Ngoni would undoubtedly have an aversion to accepting the message. Beyond this speculation, there are not sufficient data to offer further answers.

One final issue must be emphasized with regard to the relationship of the Kitawala to the Tonga and Ngoni. The Kitawala preached a message of personal conversion. The Tonga were prepared to accept such a message because of their traditional stress on individualism--a point undoubtedly further reinforced by the early European missions. On the other hand, the Ngoni probably could not conceive so readily of a salvation which emphasized personal conversion rather than more group-oriented religious practices.

Turning briefly to the role of the Colonial Administration in the Tonga and Ngoni relationships to the Kitawala, I would like to stress the political aspect of the movement. To the Ngoni, the Administration must have represented a foreign power which was infringing upon traditional territory and rights. The Ngoni did not appreciate the Administration's discouraging Ngoni raiding of surrounding tribes. Furthermore, the arrival of the Administration stopped tribute payments to the Ngoni by other tribes and instead instituted taxes to be paid by all (including the Ngoni) to the Administration.

But the Tonga view of the colonial authorities was different. The Administration with its demand of taxes was still oppressive to the Tonga, but unlike the Ngoni, the Tonga did not want conditions to revert



to the pre-colonial situation. The Tonga wanted to run their own affairs, but they also wanted the advantages of a European-type economy, and social and political equality with the whites.

Thus, to the Tonga, the Kitawala offered a salvation which was political and social as well as religious--freedom from the Ngoni, liberation from the whites, individual religious experience, easy baptism with the accompanying social status, eventual economic parity with the Europeans, political self-determination--in short, paradise on earth.





## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

Two of the four research goals delineated in the first chapter of this essay remain: first, to establish some of the reasons for the development of the Kitawala as a phenomenon distinct from the Jehovah's Witnesses in America; and second, to determine the relevance which this study may have for more general theoretical speculations concerning millenarian movements and acculturation.

#### I

#### JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES AND WATCHTOWERITES

The format adopted for the presentation of the data in this essay clearly indicates the role played by independent leaders in the development of both the original Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society and the Kitawala. Certainly the character of the Watch Tower Society reflected much of the personalities of its founder, Pastor Russell, and, in turn, of the later presidents of the organization. Similarly, the Kitawala reflects the personalities of those who originated and developed the character of this movement, particularly of Booth, Kamwana and Nyirenda.

Russell and Booth both came from a theologically conservative Protestantism which has a history of factionalism and sectarianism. The lack of an intellectually integrated theology and the absence of stringent control over an individual congregation or minister are often associated with this variety of Protestantism. Consequently, both



Russell and Booth were free to establish movements based on their personal opinions and beliefs. That the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society eventually realized their error in allowing adherents to operate within the framework of the Society without the Society having control over their activities is indicated by the fact that, after the war, when the Society was again allowed to operate legally in many regions of Africa, it adopted a policy of strict control over its membership. This policy was geared specifically to eliminating the possibility of further native-controlled offshoots of the Jehovah's Witnesses.

There is a further point concerning the issue of leadership in the Watch Tower Society and the Kitawala. The Society was organized to formally train persons for positions of leadership. This provided a measure of controlled continuity to Witness doctrine and practice. On the other hand, the Kitawala depended (a) for its leaders, on spontaneous and unformalized processes by which leaders emerged and attracted followers, and (b) for continuity, on personal contacts between the different leaders.

As far as we know, Charles Russell established the Watch Tower Society in response to his personal religious quest. Since the establishment of the Society, it has apparently maintained a primarily religious stance. On the other hand, the Kitawala clearly represents a politico-religious movement. In other words, it seems to me that Booth, Kamwana, Nyirenda, and the numerous other leaders of the Kitawala were not preaching a religious message, but rather a basically political message with religious symbolism and a religious rationale. The end of the message was political while the means of communication was a religious system. Booth, in particular, seems to have espoused the





Watch Tower message for at least two ulterior motives: first, the Society provided him with financial support, literature, and the prestige of the backing of an American organization; second, the Watch Tower gospel was conducive to spreading his own Pan-African political philosophy. Thus, from the very inception of the Watch Tower Society in Africa, the gospel it proclaimed was deliberately slanted toward political ends.

The difference, then, between the political orientation of the Kitawala and the religious posture of the Jehovah's Witnesses in America is readily observable. The Kitawala emerged in response to the political, social and economic oppression of the colonial administrations and assumed the rationale of the only aspect of society over which the indigenous population could exercise some degree of control--religion. In America, the Jehovah's Witnesses were in society, but not of society (Cohn, 1954); in Africa, the Kitawala was a movement which attracted those who sought political, social and economic equality with the white society which imposed itself upon tribal communities. Similarly, viewed in terms of the distinctions suggested by Toynbee (1947:375-420), the doctrine of the two movements was a doctrine of the internal proletariat which recommended itself to the external proletariat.

The Watchtowerites borrowed and revamped the eschatological emphasis of the Jehovah's Witnesses. Both groups eagerly awaited the imminent millennium, but the content of this thousand year period was construed to be quite different in each case. The Watchtowerites awaited a political, social and economic salvation which entailed the overthrow of colonial governments and the expulsion of the whites from Africa. The Jehovah's Witnesses in America awaited the reign of Christ in the





ideal theocratic society.

The last point which I suggest influenced the divergence of the Watch Tower Society and the Kitawala is the familiar problem of missionizing in a foreign culture. The Jehovah's Witnesses, whose beliefs entertain a complex of apocalyptic symbolism, are particularly susceptible to such trouble. Thus, as has been documented, the basic religious symbolism of the Witnesses was reinterpreted and reapplied to events and issues which were culturally comprehensible to the African Watchtowerites. There was a revival of traditional tribal practices which accompanied the spread of the Kitawala. At the same time, these customs found a place in the systematic rationale behind the Kitawala.

To summarize, then, I suggest five major reasons for the emergence of the Kitawala as a movement which, though related to the American Watch Tower movement, is nonetheless distinctive. First, in the early stages of Watch Tower penetration into Africa, the Society did not maintain strict control over the message or activities of its missionaries. Second, because of this lack of control on the part of the Society, independent leaders such as Booth, Kamwana and Nyirenda were at liberty to direct the movement in any way which they chose. In addition to this, the Society did not train African adherents in order to provide a continuity of leadership. Instead, leaders emerged as they could gather a group of followers. Third, the Kitawala was provided with an essentially political message from two sources, the Pan-Africanism of Booth and the desire on the part of African adherents to overcome political oppression. Fourth, the Watchtowerite interpretation of the millennium preached by the Witnesses included the return of Africa to the control of the blacks and the re-institution of some facets of



traditional tribal society. Fifth, the entire problem of missionizing with the inter-cultural confrontation of religious symbolism was an issue with which the Watch Tower encountered a great deal of difficulty.

## II

### RELATIONSHIP TO THEORY

How does the material presented in this study relate to existing theory concerning millenarian movements? I have selected certain of the relevant theoretical contributions of Lanternari (1965) and Wallace (1966) in order to demonstrate this relationship.

Lanternari was chosen because he offers an overview of messianic and millenarian phenomena and in his comparative analysis concentrates on internal and external social factors which contribute to the emanation of such movements. I selected Wallace because he discusses revitalization as a factor in millenarian movements.

#### Lanternari and Religious Movements

Lanternari suggests that though millenarian movements are basically religious in character, they have at least two further goals. These include the attainment of freedom and salvation: "freedom from subjection and servitude to foreign powers as well as from adversity, and salvation from the possibility of having the traditional culture destroyed and the native society wiped out as a historical entity" (Lanternari, 1965:239).

Lanternari further claims that two related factors have been the precipitating causes of nativistic religious movements throughout the world: first, "... the intensified efforts of imperialism to bring





the aborigines under control ..."; and second, "... the growing awareness on the part of the native peoples of the economic and cultural lags in their own societies as compared to the civilization of the West" (Lanternari, 1965:242).

All of these characteristics are clearly observable in the Kitawala. I have demonstrated in Chapter Four the political relationships between the tribal Tonga and Ngoni, and the colonial administration and missions. Certainly the oppression of white rule was a decisive factor in the eruption of the Kitawala. Likewise, the data repeatedly indicate that the desire for Western economic goods and concomitant social prestige contributed to the growth of the Kitawala.

Lanternari makes a distinction between religious movements which emanate from "internal" and "external" causes. This distinction, he cautions, must be viewed in a dialectical sense as in practice internal and external causes are interwoven in the process of history. Movements motivated by external sources (i.e., intercultural clash) "... tend to seek salvation by immediate action through militant struggle or through direct and determined opposition to the foreign forces which beset them ..." (Lanternari, 1965:247). Endogenous (i.e., those motivated internally) movements, however, "... look for salvation through spiritual, cultural, or ethical channels as illustrated by the Apostles ..." (Lanternari, 1965:247).

If we subject the Kitawala data to analysis by these two criteria, I believe we would be forced to conclude that the motivation for the Kitawala was overwhelmingly external. The Watchtowerites were in "direct ... opposition to the foreign forces which beset them", even to the point of militancy as in the case of the 1935 disturbances in the



Copperbelt of Northern Rhodesia. Yet, I suggest that the Tonga and Ngoni data in Chapter Four indicate that there were internal factors which, in the case of the Tonga, motivated them to accept the Kitawala, while similar factors motivated the Ngoni to reject the movement.

Regardless of whether Lanternari talks about internal or external motivations for religious movements, it seems to me that in both cases he deals with the structure of social phenomena. When a religious movement is externally motivated, this involves the "clash" of differing social structures. Endogenous movements involve outbursts of anxiety from within a culture.

There are two points at which I disagree with Lanternari. First, while he adequately demonstrates the value of considering the role of social phenomena in the motivation of religious movements he has a tendency to attach relatively incidental importance to individual psychology and likewise to ignore the similarities in the content and orientation of differing cultures.

Second, in the words of Sylvia Thrupp (1962:17),

... our modern obsession with the themes of anxiety and insecurity should not be projected, without good supporting evidence, into the interpretation of millennial movements. A belief that the end of the world is imminent may cause excitement and call for certain decisive actions, without any spirit of anxiety. It follows that we need not insist on finding special occasions of insecurity in the social situations in which the movements arise.

This point, I believe, is verified by the Kitawala data. Certainly there were some situations of mass tension and anxiety in the history of the Kitawala, and discontent with white rule was continually evident.





But at the same time, in early 1914, "... it was ... Kamwana who was sitting at the Chinde mouth ... waiting for the coming of the Millennial Age" (Shepperson and Price, 1958:212).

### Wallace and Revitalization Movements

Wallace has established a five-point classification of the stages of a revitalization movement, which is defined as "... any conscious, organized effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture" (Wallace, 1966:30). I shall briefly describe each of these five stages and discuss them in view of the Kitawala data.

(1) The Steady State. "This is a period of moving equilibrium. Culture change occurs during the steady state but is of a relatively slow and chain-like kind" (Wallace, 1966:158). At certain times stress occurs, but not beyond the limit which most individuals can tolerate.

If this stage may be applied at all to the developments which later culminated in the Kitawala, it would have to include the last quarter of the nineteenth century when, according to our previous examples, the Tonga first came into sustained contact with white colonialists. We noted how the arrival of the missions affected the internal and external politics of the Tonga. This was also the period when the first southward migrations of Tonga laborers took place. Undoubtedly the imposition of the whites greatly affected Tonga society economically, socially and politically.

(2) The Period of Increased Individual Stress. "The socio-cultural system is being 'pushed' progressively out of equilibrium by various forces, such as ... war and conquest, social subordination, or acculturation" (Wallace, 1966:159). Individuals become disillusioned,





"... crime, illness and individualistic asocial responses increase ...", but the situation is still construed to be one of "fluctuation within the steady state".

During the first decade of the twentieth century, individuals such as Kamwana and Nyirenda arose among the Lakeside Tonga. As our data indicate, Kamwana was disillusioned by the establishment of school fees at the Overtoun Institute and consequently left the country, working his way south until he eventually met Booth. Life under the colonial regime had become intolerable. Whether or not crime and illness increased, the data do not specify.

(3) The Period of Cultural Distortion. "Some members of the society attempt, piecemeal and ineffectively, to restore personal equilibrium by adopting socially dysfunctional expedients.... 'Scape-goating' by attacking other groups or a central bureaucracy ... (becomes an) institutionalized effort to circumvent the evil effects of 'the system' or 'the Establishment'" (Wallace, 1966:159).

(4) The Period of Revitalization. Revitalization depends upon the following: (a) formulation of a code, wherein an individual or a group of individuals develops a vision of the new and perfect society which is contrasted with the evils and oppression of the existing system; (b) communication, which is a time of preaching the new code in an evangelistic spirit. Converts are actively sought as the new code is depicted as a means of "spiritual salvation for the individual and of cultural salvation for the society"; (c) organization, wherein the group of converts expands and divides into two groups--disciples and followers. "The disciples increasingly become the executive organization, responsible for administering the evangelistic program, protecting the



formulator, combating heresy, and so on" (Wallace, 1966:261); (d) adaptation, which is a period of reworking the code to eliminate inadequacies and contradictions which are discovered; (e) cultural transformation, which occurs if the movement achieves a large enough following to have its code accepted by a substantial portion of the population; (f) routinization, which occurs when the function of the movement shifts from innovation to maintenance.

(5) The New Steady State. When the movement has been routinized, a new steady state may be said to exist.

The Kitawala data verify only stages (a) and (b) of the period of revitalization. The Kitawala doctrine proclaimed a new society which would be free of the whites and yet retain the economic advantages of the whites. This millennial vision was indeed communicated to masses of converts. But the succeeding stages of revitalization suggested by Wallace are not exemplified by the Kitawala. The stages of organization, adaptation, transformation and routinization do not apply to this movement.

I suggest there are three reasons for this. First, the Kitawala as a movement lacked organization and, in fact, was a breakaway from the established formal organization of the Watch Tower Society. Second, the Watchtowerite movement was itself fragmented, a portion being Kenanite and following Kamwana, a portion being the "Mwana Lesa" version of Nyirenda, etc. To speak of the "organization" of such a fragmented movement is nearly impossible. Third, the Kitawala seems to have eventually factionalized into groups following various leaders and, in time, lost its identity. Thus, the "millennial dream" of the Kitawala never materialized and the "code" of the movement was never routinized.





It seems to me that there are four major problems with Wallace's classification of revitalization movements of which the Kitawala, as a millenarian movement, ought to be representative (Wallace, 1966:164). First, Wallace's suggested "periods" in the revitalization process are, by implication, sequential, though there would be a certain overlapping from one to another. Perhaps it would be worthwhile to recast these "periods" (particularly the second, third and fourth) as "processes" which occur more or less simultaneously. Certainly the data concerning the Kitawala would more closely approximate Wallace's typology if the time sequence of the various periods were ignored and instead viewed analytically as processes occurring more or less concomitantly.

Second, Wallace implies that a religious movement such as the Kitawala would be "singular" and "isolated" vis à vis other similar phenomena. In fact, the Kitawala is only analytically distinct. Historically, the Watchtowerite movement (a) was fragmented internally, in the sense described above, and (b) took place in the context of other movements--religious, social, and political--the manifestations of which are inextricably interwoven with the Kitawala phenomena. Exactly what the interrelationship was between the Kitawala and Kimbanguism, Kenanism, the Mwana Lesa faction, etc. is difficult, if not impossible, to determine (Balandier, 1953; Shepperson and Price, 1958; Andersson, 1958). Yet a classification like that which Wallace suggests must deal with the Kitawala as a historical isolate.

Third, the efficacy of Wallace's classification hinges on an "equilibrium" model. I am not convinced that the Kitawala may be adequately described in these terms. It is nearly impossible to



determine when Tonga society enjoyed a "steady state" previous to the emanation of the Kitawala. Likewise, it is a certainty that the Kitawala did not achieve a new "steady state" following a period of "revitalization". The Kitawala data, then, mitigate strongly against the type of equilibrium model proposed by Wallace.

Fourth, it seems to me that Wallace changes levels of abstraction in his classification of revitalization movements. The first three periods which he suggests represent stages of change in the total social order. The final two periods pertain to change not in society as a whole, but to the specific movement under study.

#### Suggestions for Further Research

I shall suggest three issues which have come to my attention during the writing of this essay and which may be viewed as topics for further research.

First I shall refer to an earlier point in this chapter where I asserted that two possible causes of factionalism within certain Protestant denominations are: (1) lack of an intellectually integrated theology; and (2) the absence of stringent control over an individual congregation or minister. It seems to me that both of these points foster factionalism and encourage individuals who "feel led" or "have a call" to break away from an established group and start a new movement. Where theology in the sense of an intellectually integrated body of religious propositions concerning God, belief and practice is absent or is not regarded as being important, "feeling" or "revelation" runs unbridled. From a practical point of view, and from the viewpoint of a believer, the sole criterion of religious epistemology is personal





experience which renders the prospective range of religious practices virtually limitless. Research must be done which determines the degree of efficacy of this factor in the motivation of religious movements. Certainly we see the importance of this point as it pertains to persons such as Russell, Booth, Kamwana, Nyirenda, etc.

Second, I believe that the research and analysis of religious movements done by persons such as Lanternari, Wallace, Thrupp and Cohn concentrate to an unwarranted degree upon the "social pathology" or the "individual psychological distortions" involved in such phenomena. Certainly social factors precipitate religious movements in the sense of "intercultural clash". Similarly, individuals strive for personal equilibrium in the context of social stress, and in doing so, generate and innovate these religious phenomena.

But it seems to me that to constantly view these phenomena as social or psychological distortions is itself a distortion, particularly when we realize that our current social and psychological thought is in terms of "adjustment" to prevailing social and psychological norms. Anthropology could benefit from a study of religious movements which is in greater sympathy and empathy with those who envision the "millennium" and thus precipitate the religious phenomena involved. Was Russell a charlatan or a man who believed himself to be in pursuit of "the Truth"? Was Booth a fickle opportunist who manipulated people to gain his own ends or did he act in good faith and out of honest concern for the blacks of Africa? The answer we would receive from analysis based upon current anthropological theory would undoubtedly be vastly different from one offered by one who actually could empathize with the vision of Russell or Booth. It seems to me that both answers are needed before a





somewhat comprehensive description or understanding of the phenomena of religious movements may be attained.

Third, anthropology is beginning to accumulate a large body of literature which describes religious movements which occur in a context of acculturation. But this acculturation usually takes place between a non-Western and Western society. I suggest that research would be profitable to determine whether or not similar or analogous phenomena occur when two non-Western cultures come into contact. For instance, if we knew in detail whether or not politico-religious movements erupted in the context of Ngoni and Tonga contact before the advent of the whites, comparison with the Kitawala movement would be most enlightening.

#### Summary

The data presented and analyzed in this study document the history of the Kitawala as a politico-religious movement in south and central Africa. The salient features of the movement correspond to those criteria which Cohn (1962) regards as characteristic of a millenarian movement. The Kitawala may likewise be understood in terms of Lanternari's social analysis of religious movements. Although the movement displays definite overtones of what Wallace has described as "revitalization", the data have led me to question the validity of this typology in the analysis of the Watchtowerite movement.

My criticisms of Wallace and Lanternari have been largely directed toward their views of religious movements as caused by social factors. In drawing attention to alternate explanations of these phenomena and emphasizing the place of individuals in the growth of such movements, I do not wish to do so to the exclusion of "sociological"



explanations. My intent is simply to encourage more comprehensive investigation of the precipitating factors and salient features of religious movements.

The purposes of this research which were outlined in Chapter One of this essay have been fulfilled. My hope is that this document will stimulate further interest in the investigation and analysis of the religious commitments and aspirations of men.





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